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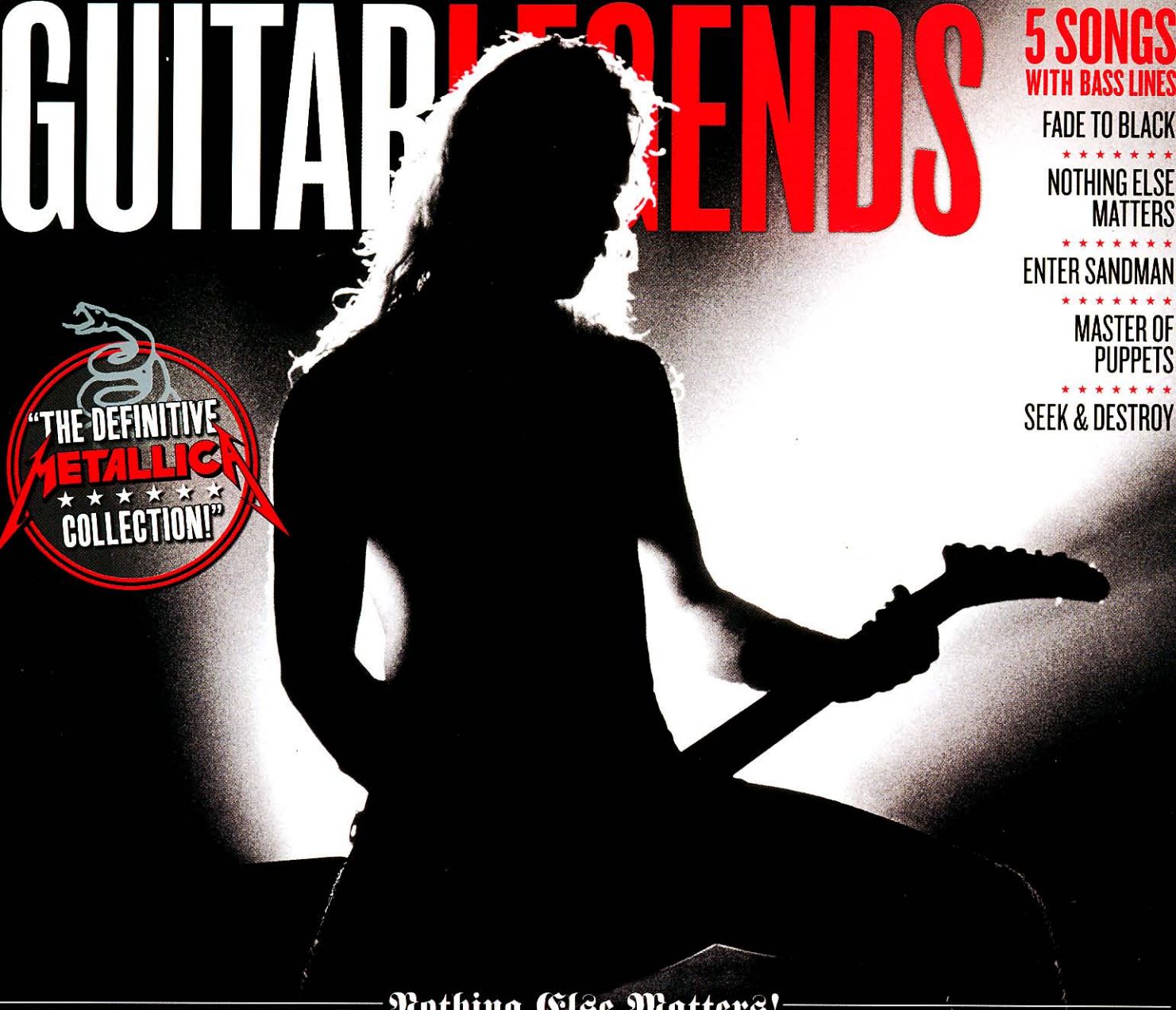

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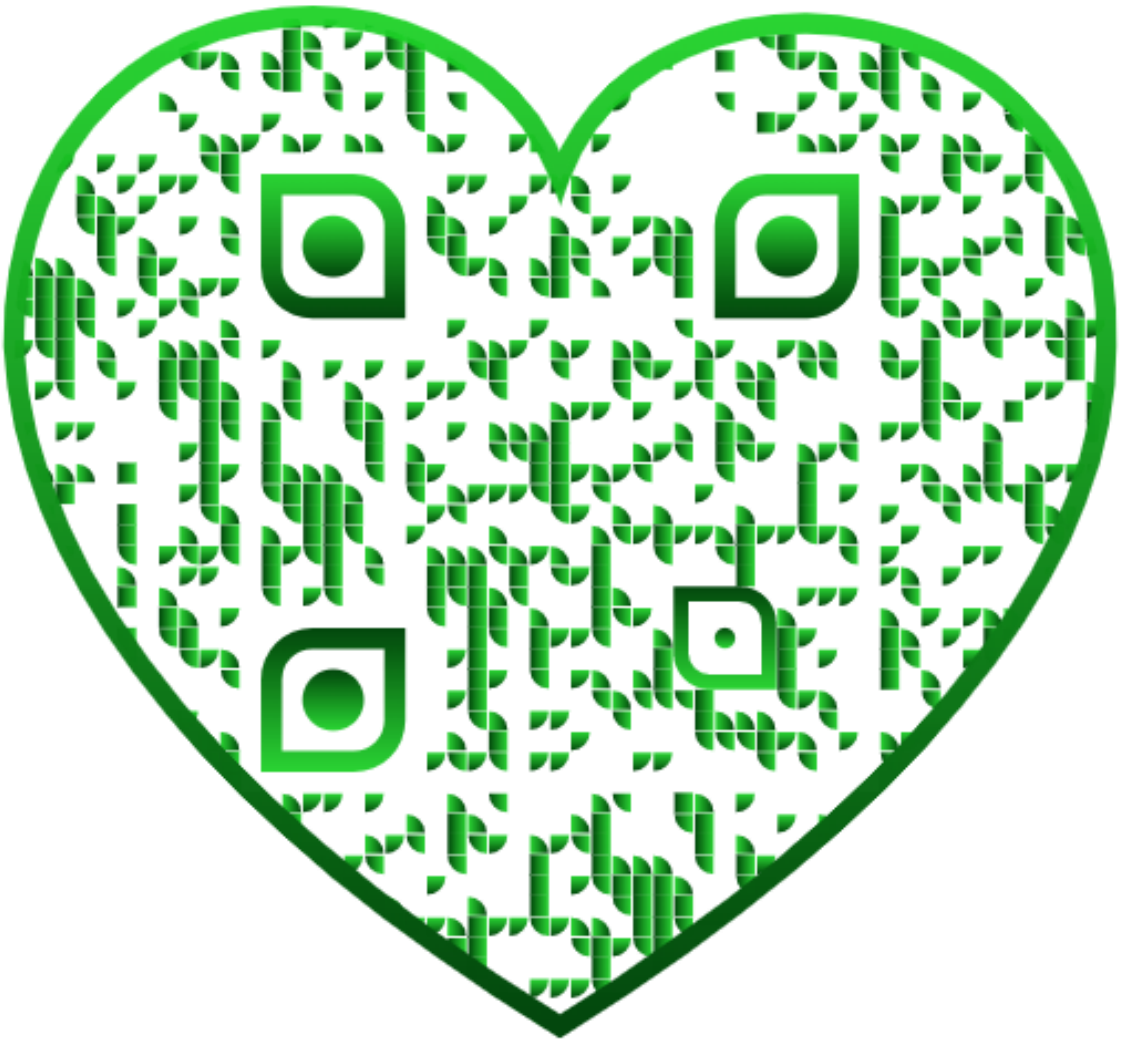

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DIGITAL IMAGING SPECIALIST **Justin Phillips**

EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING OFFICES
149 5th Ave., 9th Floor, New York, NY 10010
(212) 768-2966; FAX: (212) 944-9279
EMAIL **soundingboard@guitarworld.com**
WEB PAGE **guitarworld.com**

BUSINESS
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR **Anthony Danzi**
adanzi@futureus.com
PUBLISHER **Greg Di Benedetto**
greg@guitarworld.com
AD DIRECTOR **Robert Dye**
646-723-5431, robert@guitarworld.com
ADVERTISING SALES **Jason Perl**
646-723-5419, jperl@futureus.com
ADVERTISING SALES **Scott Sciacca**
646-723-5478, ssciacca@futureus.com
ADVERTISING SALES **Jeff Tyson**
646-723-5421, jtyson@futureus.com
AD COORDINATOR **Anna Blumenthal**
646-723-5404, anna@guitarworld.com
MARKETING MANAGER **Chris Campana**
646-723-5416, ccampana@futureus.com

PRODUCTION
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4000 Shoreline Court, Suite 400, South San Francisco, CA 94080
www.futureus.com

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NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN **Roger Parry**
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GROUP FINANCE DIRECTOR **John Bowman**
Tel +44 1225 442244
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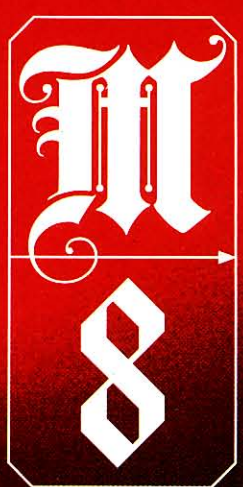

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Old
Rock'n'Roll
Florida
MASH
WHISKEY

ENCYCLOPEDIA METALLICA

AN A-TO-Z OVERVIEW OF THE MOST MAGNIFICENT METAL ACT OF ALL TIME

BY ALAN DI PERNA

THROUGHOUT ROCK HISTORY there have been bands that started out as concepts before they ever became bands. Some guy has an idea and then goes out and assembles a bunch of musicians to embody that idea. The Monkees, the Spice Girls and the Sex Pistols are three notable instances. It's a common scenario, although one that rarely occurs in metal. The quintessential metal band's bio is usually a tale of four or five mooks who start out in a garage somewhere, make derivative noise for a while and then slowly discover an identity.

Metallica are metal's notable exception to this paradigm. The whole thing began with drummer Lars Ulrich's unquenchable urge to have a band. He secured a record deal for the entity that would become Metallica long before the now-celebrated lineup—featuring guitar legends Kirk Hammett and James Hetfield—was in place, and long before he was even very good behind a drum kit. The irrepressible drummer pretty much willed Metallica into being. He's got that kind of energy.

But most concept bands are short lived. They tend to last only as long as the pop culture moment that gave rise to the concept that gave rise to them. And here's where Metallica pull away from the pack.

Now in their third decade of existence, Metallica have become one of the greatest metal acts of all time, right up there in the pantheon with Led Zeppelin, Van Halen, Ozzy and all the others. One key to their longevity is the fact that they've fearlessly altered their style as they've evolved, which is also a relative rarity in the world of metal.

Metallica started out as champions of the early Eighties thrash metal scene, a genre that they played a large role in inventing. But they soon moved on from there, drawing cries of "sellout" from disaffected punters while attracting larger and larger audiences. As of this writing, they've sold more than 90 million records worldwide. Their very name has become synonymous with the metal genre itself.

"The cool thing about Metallica is that there's always a new generation of angry young men who latch onto *Kill 'Em All* and know what I'm talking about," Hetfield says. "We've never been about creating some fantasy world with our records; we're just documenting where we're at at the time. There's always going to be youth on the planet. And every time I look out in the crowd and see some kids battling it out in the middle of the mosh pit, I'm like, 'Yeah, I was there, man.' "

The Metallica story is a classic metal band saga, replete with revolving door personnel changes, tragic death, trashed recording studios, stints in rehab, career peaks and valleys, and, of course, loads of the most thunderous, aggressive and heaviest music the world has ever known.

GARAGE DAYS

The whole thing began, as mentioned, with Lars Ulrich, the Danish-born son of tennis pro Torben Ulrich. Lars' original life ambition was to follow in his father's footsteps. The family even moved from Denmark to Los Angeles so that Lars could pursue a career in tennis. But when the New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWOBHM) scene exploded out of the U.K. in the late Seventies, spearheaded by bands like Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Saxon and Motörhead, the 16-year-old found his true calling. He wanted to be part of this new metal scene any way he could. He traveled to England to follow NWOBHM frontrunners Diamond Head from gig to gig, befriending the band's lead guitarist Brian Tatler. He also helped Geoff Barton, editor of U.K. metal mag *Kerrang!*, put together a compilation of NWOBHM bands.

METALLICA CIRCA 1985: (FROM LEFT) JAMES HETFIELD, LARS ULRICH, KIRK HAMMETT AND CLIFF BURTON

ROSS HALFIN

AT BROADWAY JACKS, IN CHICAGO, DECEMBER 15, 1983

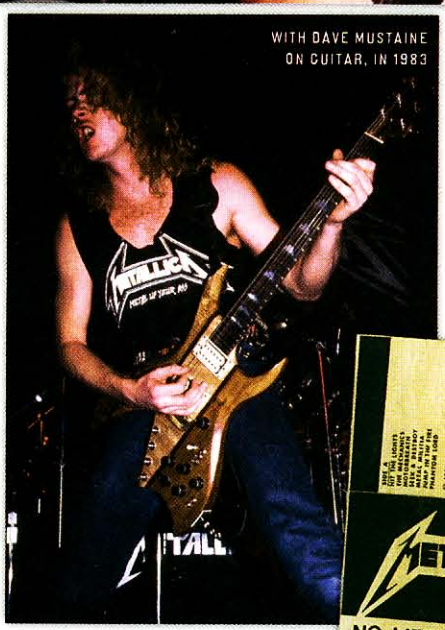
But Ulrich wasn't content to cheer metal on from the sidelines. Back home in L.A. in 1981, he placed an advertisement in *The Recycler*, a local classified ads paper, canvassing for other musicians to jam with and listing the Tygers of Pan Tang, Diamond Head and Iron Maiden as his influences. One of those who replied to his ad was James Hetfield, a young guitarist who'd fallen in love with rock and metal, despite being raised in a strict Christian Scientist family. Hetfield had already had some experience playing with local bands bearing marginally risible names like Obsession, Phantom Lord and Leather Charm. Hetfield's initial jam with Ulrich, which also included Leather Charm guitarist Hugh Tanner, was something less than spectacular.

"Lars had a pretty crappy drum kit, with one cymbal that kept falling over," Hetfield recalls. "We'd have to stop playing and he'd pick the fucking thing up. He really was not a good drummer."

But Ulrich has never been one to give up easily. He'd befriended another metal enthusiast, Brian Slagel, who edited an early fanzine called *The New Heavy Metal Review*. Slagel was planning to release a compilation album to be titled *The New Heavy Metal Review Presents Metal Massacre*, and Lars persuaded Slagel to let him have a track on the album, tactfully omitting to mention that he didn't actually have a band, nor even any written material to record.

Armed with Slagel's promise, Ulrich went back to Hetfield, who was seduced by the idea of having a track on an actual, real record album. And so Ulrich and Hetfield, together with a guitarist named Lloyd Grant and a bassist named Ron McGovney, knocked out the first-ever Metallica recording, "Hit the Lights," which was released on the 1981 *Metal Massacre* compilation.

The story of how the band got the name Metallica offers another example of Ulrich's ability not to let scruples stand in the way of his hard-driven ambition. One of Lars' friends at the time was a radio DJ named Ron Quintana, who was planning to start his own fanzine. He was vacillating between two possible names



WITH DAVE MUSTAINE ON GUITAR, IN 1983

that he had devised for the publication. One was *Metal Mania* and the other was *Metallica*. Ulrich promptly persuaded him that *Metal Mania* was the way to go, leaving Lars free to pinch Metallica for his own fledgling band. In all likelihood, Quintana himself had lifted the name from the *Encyclopedia Metallica*, a metal reference book that had just been published at the time (and the name of which was adapted from the venerable research resource the *Encyclopedia Britannica*).

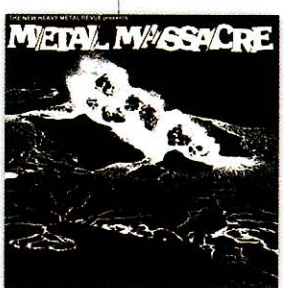
The early Metallica lineup was unstable to say the least. Lloyd Grant didn't even last long enough play the band's first gig. His place was taken by Dave Mustaine, a talented and outspoken newcomer at the time. By this point Ron McGovney had already surrendered the bass slot to Cliff Burton from the band Trauma, whom the Metallica guys had seen perform at the Whisky in L.A.

James Hetfield fondly remembers Burton as "a wild, hippie-ish, acid-taking, bell-bottom-wearing guy. He meant business and you couldn't fuck around with him. I wanted to get the respect that he had." Burton would prove to be a key member of Metallica and had a large impact on the band's early style and direction. One of his first moves was to induce the band to relocate to his home city of San Francisco, saying he wouldn't join Metallica unless they made the move.

Dave Mustaine's tenure in Metallica lasted until 1983, when he was kicked out of the band for drunken unreliability shortly after insulting guitar virtuoso Adrian Vandenberg at a soundcheck at the L'amour club in Brooklyn. He would of course go on to fame at the helm of Megadeth. Taking Mustaine's place on lead guitar was Kirk Hammett, a veteran of the band Exodus and a former guitar student of Joe Satriani. Ulrich, Hetfield and Burton persuaded Hammett to make his blinding technique a part of Metallica.

"I was familiar with Metallica's music before I joined the band," Hammett recalls. "Exodus played with Metallica pretty often in San Francisco. The first time I spoke to Lars was after they had just finished a set and I said, 'Thanks for letting us play. I really like you guys.' He said, 'Yeah, yeah, cool, cool.' But as I was talking to him, he started taking his stage clothes off, and before I knew it, he was completely naked in front of me. I was just shocked. I said to myself, 'Oh he's European. Europeans do stuff like this.' "

Ulrich, in turn, responded to the naked emotion in Hammett's playing. "I remember the first time I heard Kirk," the drummer recollects. "He had a feel that very few young players have – very rooted in European metal. It was really nice to hear an American guy who didn't play like Eddie Van Halen."



A KILLER DEBUT

Various early Metallica lineups had recorded several influential demos, including the *Power Metal* and *No Life Till Leather* recordings. This landed Metallica a deal on Megaforce Records. And in the spring of 1983 Metallica descended on Music

TOP: FRANK WHITE; MIDDLE: KEVIN HODAPP/FRANK WHITE PHOTO AGENCY

America Studios in Rochester, New York, to record their debut album, *Kill 'Em All*, with producer Paul Curico.

Hammett attributes much of the tough-as-nails guitar sound on *Kill 'Em All* to "James' magical, mythical Marshall. All the guitar stuff was recorded through that. He'd had it modified by some guy in L.A. who used to work on Eddie Van Halen's gear. I used it too because we didn't have much equipment back then. I played my black Flying V and James used his white Flying V. Those were the only guitars we had. I also used a wah pedal and Boss Super Distortion."

"It was Cliff who named the album," Hetfield adds. "Originally we were supposed to call it *Metal Up Your Ass*. We got a phone call from our manager telling us half the record outlets wouldn't carry the album if we called it that. Cliff said, 'You know what? Fuck those fuckers, man. We should just kill 'em all.' "

The album, released on July 25, 1983, became one of the first major statements of a burgeoning new genre called "thrash metal." An amalgam of NWOBHM and hardcore punk, thrash metal was very much an underground phenomenon at the time. Mainstream rock attention in the early Eighties was divided between new wave/post-punk/synth-pop acts like the Police, U2, the Cure, Talking Heads and Depeche Mode on the one hand and the more accessible metal sounds of acts like Van Halen and Ozzy Osbourne on the other. Thrash metal was hardly on the radar, but the genre's lightning-fast tempos hit a responsive note with a growing subculture of hyperactive, testosterone-crazed adolescent males.

"Part of the reason why we would play so fast is because we were just nervous," Hammett says. "As a young musician, when I was nervous I had a tendency to speed things up. Joining Metallica, I thought, This is great, because it can never be too fast."

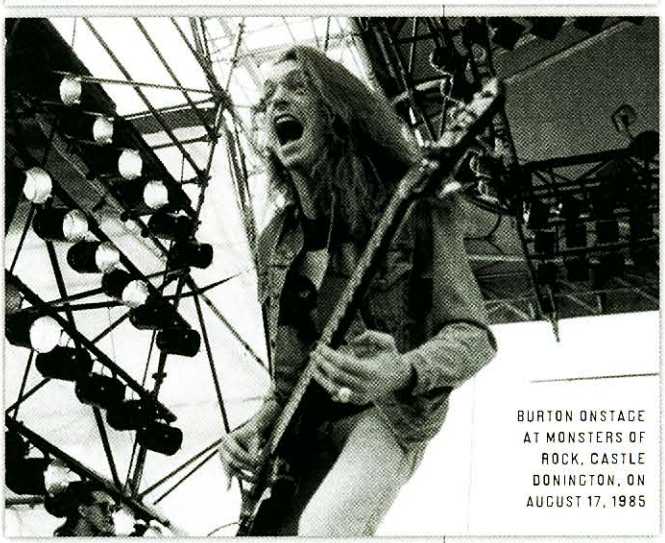
> "A PART OF METALLICA WAS LOST FOREVER WHEN CLIFF DIED."
> —KIRK HAMMETT

"Lars was always nervous onstage," Hetfield adds, "so he'd just play faster and faster. Nobody wanted to wimp out and tell him. We figured, 'Hell, we'll just play faster too.' And that's what we did on the record as well."

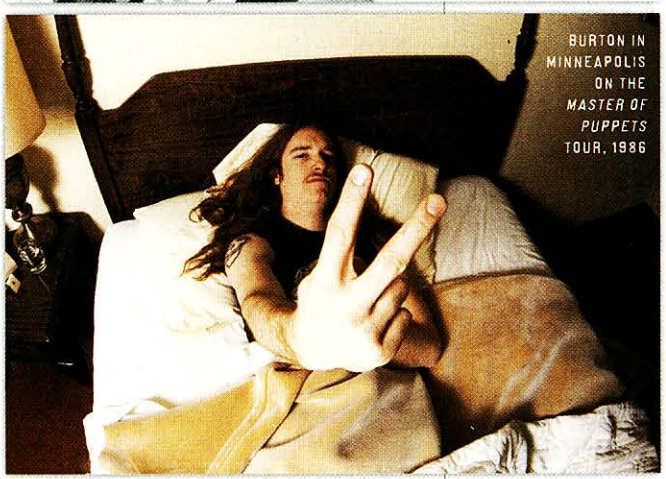
MAJOR-LABEL ASCENDANCY

Solid sales of *Kill 'Em All* did not go unnoticed by Elektra Records. The label signed Metallica, which made them the first thrash metal act to be picked up by a major label. By this point the band had already finished recording its second album, *Ride the Lightning*, at Sweet Silence Studios in Copenhagen, Denmark. At the production helm was Flemming Rasmussen, who would become an important member of the team for the next few Metallica albums. When *Ride the Lightning* hit the streets in fall of 1984, it marked a significant creative step forward for the band.

ULRICH AND HAMMETT BACKSTAGE AT MICKEY'S, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, AUGUST 14, 1983



BURTON ONSTAGE AT MONSTERS OF ROCK, CASTLE DONINGTON, ON AUGUST 17, 1985



BURTON IN MINNEAPOLIS ON THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, 1986

"Cliff Burton was responsible for a lot of the things that happened between *Kill 'Em All* and *Ride the Lightning*," says Ulrich. "Cliff really exposed James and me to a whole new musical horizon of harmonies and melodies. [*Our*] whole way of writing songs together was very much shaped around Cliff's musical input."

" 'Creeping Death' was our first big chanting, gang-vocal song," Hetfield adds. "There was almost some production value to it!"

The band's guitar sound was evolving too, according to Kirk Hammett. "I tracked the whole album with Marshall amps and my Gibson Flying V," he says. "And by then James had his Gibson Explorer."

Ride the Lightning is also memorable for containing what is often hailed as the world's first thrash metal ballad, "Fade to Black." "It's a suicide song," says Hetfield, "and we got a lot of flack for that, [*as if*] kids were killing themselves because of the song. But we also got hundreds and hundreds of letters from kids telling us how they related to the song and that it made them feel better. It was also pretty much our first ballad, so it was challenging and we knew it would freak people out. Bands like Exodus and Slayer don't do ballads, but they've stuck themselves in that position, which is something we've never wanted to do. Limiting yourself to please your audience is bullshit."

By the mid Eighties, thanks to proper tour support, promotion and other key financial backing from Elektra, Metallica were starting to have a significant impact on the mainstream. They worked their way up the ladder on the metal festival circuit, playing to more than 70,000 happy punters at the Monsters of Rock fest in Donington, England, in 1985. In September, they once again entered Denmark's Sweet Silence Studios with producer Flemming Rasmussen and emerged with one of their all-time classic albums: *Master of Puppets*. Bruising anthems like "Battery," "Damage, Inc." and "Disposable Heroes" have become essential repertoire for aspiring metal guitarists, not to mention the album's title track. The signature descending riff in "Master of Puppets" grew out of dressing room jams that took place on the *Ride the Lightning* tour.

"James would always play that riff, but on the D string," Hammett recalls. "And I'd play it simultaneously on the G string as a parallel-fourths harmony line. It sounded really dorky and funny. Then, one day at rehearsal, James said, 'Let me show you this really heavy song

TOP: GENE AMBO; MIDDLE AND BOTTOM: ROSS HALFIN

IN A STAIRWELL BACKSTAGE AT THE AGORA BALLROOM, CHICAGO, ON THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, 1986

intro,' and proceeded to play that exact riff on the low E string.' I said, 'Ah, so you finally found a use for that dorky little thing!' It's anything but dorky now.

"I used a Mesa/Boogie Mark II-C head and my Jackson Randy Rhoads V on 'Master of Puppets,' " Hammett goes on to explain. "When you listen to the solo, there's this weird sound right after the mellow part, where it sounds like I'm hitting a super high note, like I'm fretting the string against the pickup. What happened was, I accidentally pulled the string off the fretboard and it fretted out on the side of the neck! I heard it back and was, like, 'That's brilliant! We've gotta keep that!' Of course I've never been able to reproduce it since."

THE DARKEST NIGHT

Released on March 3, 1986, *Master of Puppets* sold half a million copies in a matter of months, giving Metallica their first Gold record and peaking at No. 29 on the *Billboard* album chart. A high-profile tour with Ozzy Osbourne further increased the band's visibility. Things had never looked better for Metallica. But then, on September 27, 1986, while traveling to a show in Copenhagen, Denmark, the band's tour bus went into a skid and veered off the road near Dorap, Sweden. The vehicle flipped over several times. Cliff Burton was asleep in his bunk at the time and was thrown through one of the bus windows. The vehicle then landed on top of his body, killing him instantly.

> "LARS WAS ALWAYS NERVOUS ONSTAGE, SO HE'D JUST PLAY FASTER AND FASTER. NOBODY WANTED TO WIMP OUT AND TELL HIM."
>
> —JAMES HETFIELD

James Hetfield will forever be haunted by what he saw and experienced that night. "I saw the bus lying right on him," he says. "I saw his legs sticking out. I went to pieces. The driver tried to take Cliff's blanket and give it to someone else. I just screamed, 'fuck that!' I wanted to kill the guy. I don't know if he was drunk or if the bus had skidded on ice. All I knew was Cliff was dead."

Burton was only 24 years old at the time of his passing, but he'd already made an indelible mark on metal history. "A part of Metallica was lost forever when Cliff died," Hammett says.

For a few grief-stricken weeks, it seemed like the end of Metallica. Hetfield was particularly against the idea of continuing without Burton. "The only thing I could think was, The band? No way. There ain't no band. The band is not that band right now. It's just three guys."

But in time, they decided to soldier on. After auditioning more than 60 bass players, they decided on Jason Newsted of the band Flotsam and Jetsam. The 23-year-old bassman faced a formidable challenge in attempting to fill the void left by the death of the well-loved Burton.

"When I came into Metallica, I had to do justice to Cliff's work, but I also had to put my own signature on it," Newsted says. "No one could be Cliff Burton; Cliff Burton was the Jimi Hendrix of bass. I had to practice, practice, practice to get anywhere close to where he was."

The band started back slowly with an EP of metal covers titled *The $5.98 E.P.: Garage Days Re-Revisited*. It was hardly a major work, but Elektra were happy to have some new Metallica product to put on the market. The EP marks the first recording on which Kirk Hammett used ESP guitars with EMG pickups. It would prove to be a long lasting association, with EMG instruments becoming a cornerstone of Hammett and Hetfield's tone in the years that followed.

ROUGH JUSTICE

By January of 1988 Metallica were ready to get back to work for real. Once again they got together with producer Flemming Rasmussen. Only this time recording took place in North Hollywood, at One on One Studios. These sessions would yield the fourth Metallica album and another essential item in the band's catalog, *...And Justice for All*. Rarely, if ever, does a metal guitar interview take place without this record being cited. In particular, tracks like "Blackened" and "Harvester of Sorrow" are held in high reverence. Containing nine songs that together clock in at more than an hour, *...And Justice for All* is generally hailed as Metallica's most progressive and technically challenging work.

"Things changed after Cliff's death," Hammett explains. Even our sound changed. On *Justice* we fell prey to that whole virtuosic, late-Eighties thing that was happening. All of a sudden, everyone wanted to be progressive and show off their abilities. Somehow, just playing fast and heavy took a back seat to that."

One band member not particularly well favored on the recording was Jason Newsted. His bass was often buried in the final mix of *...And Justice for All*. The bassist found himself in a difficult position. He became an object of resentment for fans who missed Burton. And it seems that he did not receive 100 percent support from his bandmates either. Newsted's tenure in Metallica would prove to be a troubled one, and he would eventually leave the band in 2001.

"There was a lot of anguish after Cliff died, and basically Jason was the punching bag,"

ALL IMAGES ROSS HALFIN

Hammett admits. "We vented so much on him, and it really wasn't fair."

But all the suffering ultimately led to a success breakthrough that was partly driven by the band's video clip for the single "One." The first Metallica video ever, it became an MTV staple. *...And Justice for All* went Platinum within three months of its release on September 6, 1988, and climbed all the way to Number Six on the *Billboard* album chart. Metallica garnered a Grammy nomination for Best Rock/Heavy Metal Performance, but infamously lost to Jethro Tull, whose late-Sixties and Seventies work certainly contained a proto-metal, riff-driven element but whom almost nobody would think of as a metal band. Metallica capitalized on the irony of the situation by affixing a sticker onto post-Grammy Award copies of *...And Justice for All* that read "Grammy Award LOSERS."

HAMMETT AND ULRICH WITH JASON NEWSTED ON THE BLACK ALBUM TOUR; SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA; JANUARY 11, 1992

WHERE BLACK IS THE COLOR AND ONE IS THE NUMBER

Touring behind the massively popular *...And Justice for All* lasted into late 1990. It wasn't until October of that year that Metallica were able to get into One on One Studios once again. But this time a new producer was in charge. The place that Flemming Rasmussen had long held was now occupied by Bob Rock, who was best known for producing commercially viable metal acts like Bon Jovi and Mötley Crüe. Rock and Metallica spent nearly a year in the studio and spent a million dollars recording the landmark metal disc that would come to be known as the "Black Album," thanks to its extremely dark cover art. (The real title is simply *Metallica*.) It holds roughly the same place of esteem in the metal world that the Beatles' "White Album" holds for rock and roll fans.

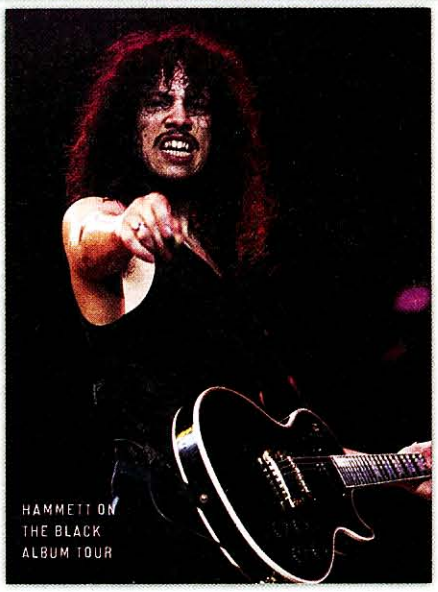
The Black Album is notable for its shorter, more accessible songs, concise riffing and melodic vocals. All these elements became a factor in the album's sales performance. But some diehard metal fans, many of whom had been following Metallica since the days of thrash, felt betrayed. Many reviled Bob Rock as the culprit behind Metallica's lapse into tunefulness, but James Hetfield rejects this notion out of hand.

"People will be saying Bob Rock made Metallica sound like Bon Jovi," he notes. "They don't realize that no one screws with us except us."

"One thing that Bob should be given total credit for," Ulrich says, "is making James comfortable enough to take his guard down and really sing. Bob taught us a new word that none of us had heard before: 'soulful.' "

While nobody would ever confuse Metallica with James Brown, they did take a more organic approach to the grooves. "What we really wanted was a live feel," Hetfield says. "In the past, Lars and I constructed with rhythm parts without Kirk and Jason. This time, I wanted to try playing as a band unit in the studio. It lightens things up and you get more of a vibe."

This musical strategy allowed Jason Newsted to come into his own on the Black Album. "The bass sound is much weightier," he says. "I tried to create a real rhythm section rather than a one-dimensional sound, and let the guitars do their work. I'm glad the rest of the band could tell me that's what was needed."


HAMMETT ON THE BLACK ALBUM TOUR

By the time the Black Album was recorded, Hammett had evolved a highly specialized, frequency-dependent approach to his guitar tone. "I used a Bradshaw preamp for the lows and mids and a couple of Marshalls for the nice clean highs," he explains. "We EQed it through the board a little bit, and it worked out great. And I used two guitars, a Strat-style ESP with two EMG pickups and an '89 Les Paul Deluxe with two EMGs."

As for Hetfield's tone, "we tried a bunch of amps," he recalls, "but I ended up using the same Mesa/Boogie Mark II Simul Class that I'd used on the previous three albums. My primary guitar was my ESP Explorer with EMGs, but I also used a Telecaster at Gretsch White Falcon with the Bigsby and a Guild 12-string."

The Black Album's lead track, "Enter Sandman," has become a metal classic. Kirk Hammett reveals that he purloined the guitar lick before the breakdown from the song "Magic Man," by Heart. "But I didn't get it [*directly*] from Heart's version," he adds. "I got it from a cut off Ice-T's *Power* album. I was listening to *Power* a lot while we were recording *Metallica*, so I kept on hearing that lick. I thought, I have to snake this! I did change it around a little bit, though."

"Enter Sandman" was the first of six hit singles from the Black Album, which also include "The Unforgiven," "Wherever I May Roam" and the acoustic ballad "Nothing Else Matters." The Black Album became Metallica's first Number One record. It sold 600,000 copies within the first week of its release in August of 1991. Since that time it has gone on to sell more than 22 million and win three Grammys for the band.

Metallica had now fully penetrated and infiltrated the mainstream. The pop-culture moment was right for them. In the early Nineties the Seattle grunge movement had eclipsed hair metal as the hard rock genre of choice, accustoming listeners to a more raw sound. Grunge had also displaced the more arty and pop-oriented aspects of Eighties alternative rock. The entire rock universe became more metal-centric starting in the Nineties. What better rulers for this new metal hegemony than a band name Metallica?

"You think one day some fucker's going to tell you, 'You have a Number One record in America' and the world will ejaculate," Ulrich says. "But I stood there in my hotel room, and there was this fax that said, 'You're Number One.' And it was like, 'Well, okay.' It was just another fucking fax from the office."

LOADED, RE-LOADED AND RUNNING OUT OF AMMUNITION

The touring cycle for the Black Album was even more protracted and demanding than it had been for *...And Justice for All*. So it wasn't until 1995 that Metallica got back into the studio with Bob Rock to record a follow-up to the Black Album. When you've hit the top, however, they say the only way to go is down. The band seemed a little unfocussed at the time. There was ambitious talk of making a double album, but what was released in June of 1996 was a single disc, *Load*. It met with a mixed reception. Some diehard metal fans found it pretentious. Others were horrified that the band members cut their hair. There was a lurking sense that Metallica were starting to lose the plot. Or maybe they just weren't giving their all anymore.

"We've nearly killed each other and others around us when we've made records before," Ulrich commented at the time. "I think we all felt that we wanted to see if we could come out of this somewhat alive."

The following year saw the release of *Re-Load*, comprised of previously unissued tracks culled from the *Load* sessions. It was hard not to view it as an album of outtakes—B material retrieved from the cutting room floor. But Me-

AT BERCY ARENA, IN PARIS, ON THE *LOAD* TOUR, 1998

tallica, and some of their devoted fans, preferred to view it as the second disc in the double album the band had been planning to make ever since the *Load* sessions began.

"We wrote 27 songs for *Load* and were developing it as a double album," says Ulrich. "As far as I'm concerned, you can take any of those songs and interchange them between the two albums."

Then came *S&M* in 1999. A recording of a performance Metallica gave earlier that year in tandem with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, it offered up symphonic versions of classic Metallica songs, under the baton of Michael Kamen, who had previously worked with rock artists like Pink Floyd, Queen and David Bowie. While some fans enjoyed hearing Metallica's gnarly arrangements transposed onto orchestral instruments, detractors flashed the "pretentious" card and also dismissed the disc as an attempt to coast on past achievements.

The new century dawned dimly for Metallica. The band's 2000 copyright infringement lawsuit against Napster and stance against illegal downloading pitted them against the internet generation. Then, in January of 2001, Jason Newsted quit the band, squeezing off a devastating parting shot. "What they are doing now is such an obvious cash thing," he said of his former bandmates; "and has nothing to do with the music that we're supposed to be fighting for."

So Bob Rock himself picked up the bass when the band entered the studio with him in April of 2001 to begin work on the album that would become *St. Anger*. The process was a difficult one and wound up taking several years. Hetfield checked into a rehab facility in July 2001 to deal with substance abuse issues. A documentary filmed during the *St. Anger* sessions, and later released under the title *Some Kind of Monster*, chronicled the band's rudderless state.

"It was the fact that there were no real songs," Bob Rock later admitted. "That was because the guy who writes the songs [*Hetfield*] couldn't do it because of what he was going through personally."

Still the band had sufficient career momentum and fanbase loyalty to put *St. Anger* at the top of the U.S. charts when it was released in June 2003. Shortly after the album's release, the band drafted former Suicidal Tendencies and Ozzy Osbourne bassist Robert Trujillo to fill Metallica's vacant bass slot. He joined just as touring behind *St. Anger* was about to commence.

DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Metallica meant business when they converged on Sound City Studios in L.A.'s San Fernando Valley in 2007. There was no denying that their fortunes had slipped somewhat during the late Nineties and early 2000s. They needed to make an album that would put them back on top. "We knew that we needed to go down a different avenue," says Hammett.

Bob Rock was out of the picture. In his place was überproducer and music-biz mastermind Rick Rubin—an ideal choice given Rubin's talent for 11th-hour career resurrection, a feat he'd performed in the past for artists like Johnny Cash and Neil Diamond. But Rubin also knows a thing or two about metal and hard rock, having produced important discs for Slayer, Danzig, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and AC/DC. In fact the Metallica guys had first met Rubin in 1986, just after he'd finished producing Slayer's *Reign in Blood*.

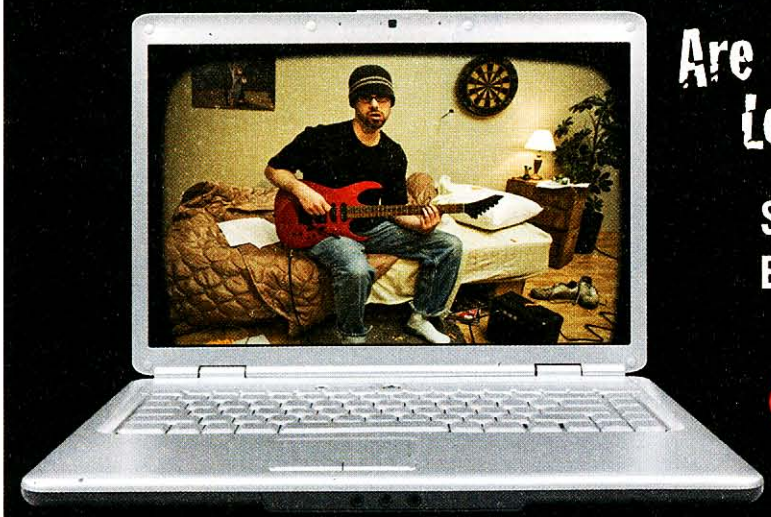
And now Metallica were in the studio with Rubin, looking for a direction home, to paraphrase Bob Dylan. The bearded, guru-like producer advised them, "Imagine that you're not Metallica. You don't have any hits to play, and you have to come up with material to play in a battle of the bands. What do you sound like?"

Thus liberated from the burden of their past, the band came up with *Death Magnetic*, an album that consolidates many of Metallica's timeless strengths while it points a way toward the future. "The new songs are all over the place," Ulrich enthused at the time of the album's release the fall of 2008. "There's a lot of variation. A lot of fast, slow, melodic...kind of hardcore, nutty superfast speed stuff. It's a little more like how some of the earlier records were, a little more dynamic within the songs."

The public seems to agree. *Death Magnetic* debuted at Number One at the time of its release and has been going strong ever since. Twenty-eight years down the road from their inception, Metallica are currently at a new career plateau.

WITH BASSIST ROBERT TRUJILLO BACKSTAGE AT THE ROCK WERCHTER FESTIVAL, BELGIUM, JULY 1, 2007

ALL IMAGES ROSS HALFIN



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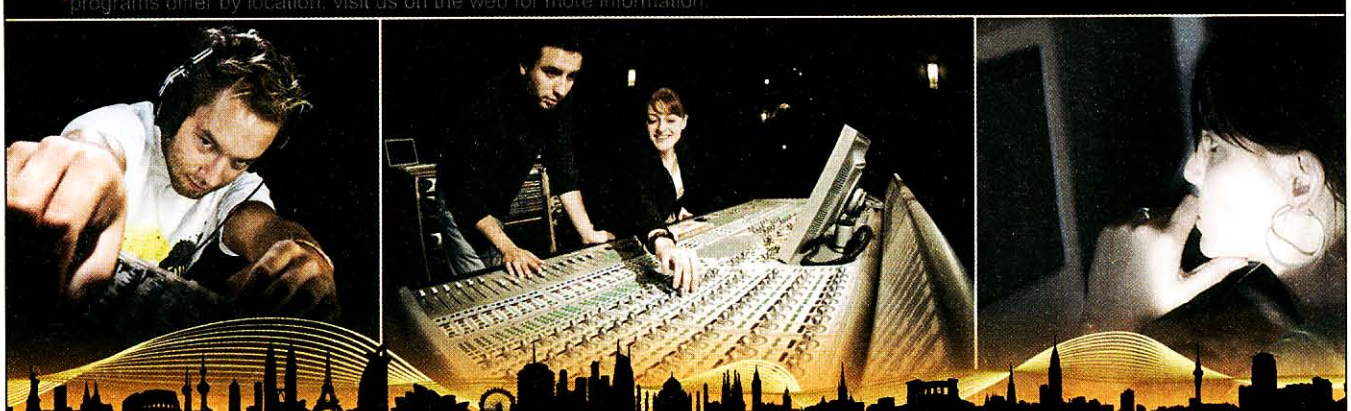

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HAMMETT AND HETFIELD PHOTOGRAPHED IN LOS ANGELES, MAY 13, 2008

ROSS HALFIN

METAL REFLECTORS

KIRK HAMMETT AND JAMES HETFIELD LOOK BACK ON SOME OF METALLICA'S BRIGHTEST MOMENTS.

METALLICA'S 1983 DEBUT, the explosive *Kill 'Em All*, taught a grateful world a lesson in unbridled thrashing fury. Since then, their sound has passed through numerous stages, but the guttural intensity that was the hallmark of the young Metallica remains the essence of the band today.

Over the past 25 years, Kirk Hammett and James Hetfield have established themselves as metal's quintessential guitar alliance. In the following retrospective, Kirk and James take a walk down Metallica memory lane and critique some of the key songs in the band's harsh, noble history.

"SEEK AND DESTROY"

KILL 'EM ALL (1983)

JAMES HETFIELD The idea for "Seek" came from a Diamond Head song called "Dead Reckoning." I used to work in a sticker factory in L.A., and I wrote that riff in my truck outside work. This was our first experience in a real studio. I used a white Flying V, which was the only guitar I had back then. I still have the guitar in storage. The song is based around a one-note riff that was up a little higher. Though most of my riffs are in E, that one worked off an A.

KIRK HAMMETT When I was doing that guitar solo, I was using James' Marshall. That was *the* Marshall—it had been hot-rodded by some L.A. guy, the same guy who hot-rodded Eddie Van Halen's Marshalls—and when it came time to do my guitar leads, I just plugged into that. I had maybe four or five days to do all my leads. I remember thinking, There's 10 or 12 songs on this album, so that means two a day. I had to throw down a solo, not think much about it, and move on.

I had my trusty old Ibanez Tube Screamer, my trusty wah pedal and my black Gibson Flying V that I used on the first four albums. It was either a '74 or a '78, I'm not sure. I didn't have much really worked out; I knew how I wanted to open

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the initial part of the solo after the break, so I just went for it two or three times. And then the producer said, "That's fine! We'll use it!" There were no frills, no contemplation, no overintellectualizing—we weren't going over the finer points. On a couple of notes in that solo, I bend the notes out of pitch. For 18 years, every time I've heard that guitar solo, those sour notes come back to haunt me! [*laughs*] I remember on that tour, whenever it came time to do that guitar solo, I was always like, Okay, I'm gonna play this *so* much better than the way I recorded it!

I had been taking lessons from Joe Satriani for, like, six months prior to joining the band, so his influence was pretty heavy in my mind and in my playing. He passed down so much information to me, I was still processing a lot of it. When it came time to do the solo, I was thinking, I hope Joe likes this. I hope this isn't something he'll just pick apart, like he has in the past.

"THE FOUR HORSEMEN"
KILL 'EM ALL

HETFIELD Dave [*Mustaine, Metallica's original guitarist*] brought that song over from one of his other bands. Back then it was called "The Mechanix." After he left Metallica, we kind of fixed the song up. The lyrics he used were pretty silly.

HAMMETT Prior to recording that song, we put in a slow middle section that wasn't there when I first joined the band, and it needed a slow, melodic solo. I remember going through the song with everyone, and when I got to that part, I played something really melodic. Lars looked up at me and said, "Yeah, yeah!" He's a big lead guitar fan. One of his biggest influences is Ritchie Blackmore. For that song I put down one lead, then added one on a different track. I wasn't sure which one to use. I listened to both tracks at once, to see if one would stand out. But playing both tracks simultaneously sounded great, and we decided to keep it like that on the record. Some of the notes harmonized with each other, and I remember Cliff [*Burton, bassist*] going, "Wow, that's stylin'—it sounds like Tony Iommi!"

"CREEPING DEATH"
RIDE THE LIGHTNING
(1984)

HETFIELD We demoed "Ride the Lightning" and one other song in the studio before we recorded the album, so there's actually a demo somewhere of those three songs with different lyrics. When we did the crunchy "Die by my hand" breakdown part in the middle, I sat in the control room after we did all the gang vocals, and everyone was just going nuts! That was our first real big, chanting, gang-vocal thing. There was almost some production value to it. That whole album was a big step for us. By then I had the Gibson Explorer. I grew to love that shape better than the V.

HAMMETT When we first began playing that song in the garage, I noticed that the lead guitar part also incorporated the chorus. I thought that was a good opportunity to play something a bit wild and dynamic. The first figure in that song pretty much came off the top of my head. I was still using the black Flying V and the Boss distortion pedal through Marshall amps, with a TC Electronics EQ. For that song, Flemming [*Rasmussen, engineer*] suggested that I double-track the solo, which made it sound a bit thicker and fuller. We did that solo, after which we had to do this small fill at the end, a four-bar break with four accents afterwards. The plan was to fill the break up and play something over the four accents. When I studied with Joe Satriani, I did this chordal exercise, a diminished chord with four notes. I just played that over these four accents, and it worked out real nice.

"FADE TO BLACK"
RIDE THE LIGHTNING

HETFIELD That song was a big step for us. It was pretty much our first ballad, so it was challenging and we knew it would freak people out. Bands like Exodus and Slayer don't do ballads, but they've stuck themselves in that position which is something we never wanted to do; limiting yourself to please your audience is bullshit.

Recording that song, I learned how frustrating acoustic guitar can be. You could hear every squeak, so I had to be careful. I wrote the song at a friend's house in New Jersey. I was pretty depressed at the time because our gear had just been stolen, and we had been thrown out of our manager's house for breaking shit and drinking his liquor cabinet dry. It's a suicide song, and we got a lot of flack for it, [*as if*] kids were killing themselves because of the song. But we also got hundreds and hundreds of letters from kids telling us how they related to the song and that it made them feel better.

HAMMETT I was still using the black Flying V, but on "Fade to Black" I used the neck pickup on my guitar to get that warm sound. I played through a wah-wah pedal all the way in the "up" position. We doubled the first solo, but it was harder to double the second solo in the middle because it was slow and there was a lot of space in it. Later I realized that I harmonized it in a weird way—in minor thirds, major thirds and fifths. For the extended solo at the end, I wasn't sure what to play. We had been in Denmark for five or six months, and I was getting really homesick. We were also having problems with our management. Since it was a somber song, and we were all bummed out anyway, I thought of very depressing things while I did the solo, and it really helped. I played some arpeggios

ROBIN KAPLAN/LONDON FEATURES (TOP LEFT); GENE AMBO (MIDDLE)

over the G-A-B progression, but we didn't double track that solo. When that was finished, I went back and did the clean guitar parts behind the verse. James played an arpeggiated figure while I arpeggiated three-note chords. We ended up getting a very Dire Straits–type sound.

"THE CALL OF KTULU"
RIDE THE LIGHTNING

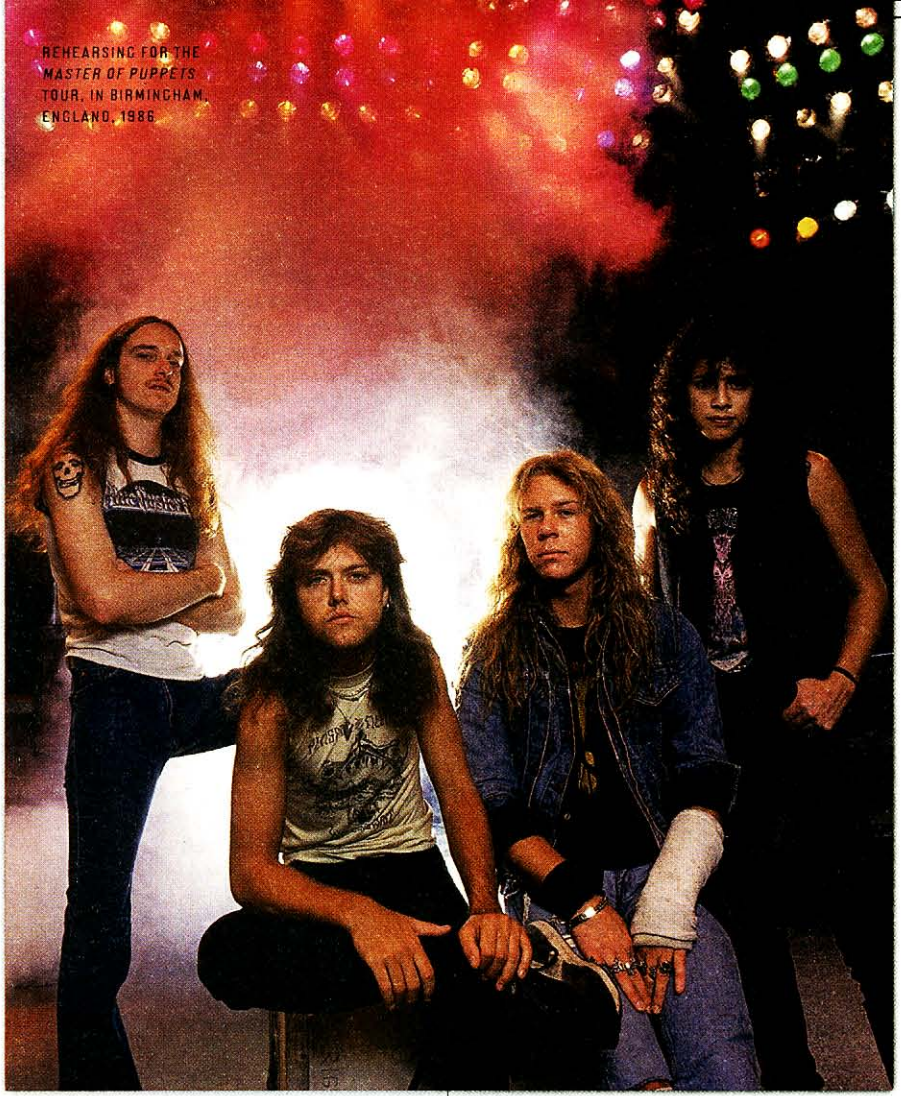
HAMMETT Again, we were using Marshalls; I tracked the whole album with Marshall amps and my Gibson Flying V. For that song, I knew that I wanted to come up with something really melodic at the beginning of the solo. At that point in the song, there's just a lot of riffing, a lot of heavy dynamics. I was thinking, Wouldn't it be nice if we had something somewhat melodic to lead into it? Hence that little melody I played. I can remember thinking, Fuckin' hell, man, these guys want me to play an awful-long fucking guitar solo! It was our first instrumental, and it was an incredibly long guitar solo. It was, like, How can I keep this solo going without making it sound like I'm just playing a bunch of notes? So I thought that I would break it up into sections rather than play one long spew of notes. I used a modal approach, and there are also arpeggios that I play in the solo. They're actually "broken arpeggios," a term that I got from Yngwie Malmsteen. At that time, 1984, Yngwie was big in the guitar world; he influenced me in that he was using all these different scales and different arpeggios, and really got me thinking about that kind of sound. I was also thinking chromatically: there's that one part at the top of the next cycle where I play a chromatic lick that goes all the way down the high E string with the wah pedal.

I actually wrote out the entire solo on pieces of paper, using my own notes and my own pet names for the individual licks. I would say that 80 percent of it was composed beforehand and 20 percent of it was improvised. When we revisited that song with the symphony on *S&M*, it was a lot of fun. It felt like I was visiting my guitar technique from, like, 15 years ago or something. I just don't play like that now—I'm a lot bluesier—so it was pretty trippy.

"WELCOME HOME (SANITARIUM)"
MASTER OF PUPPETS (1986)

HETFIELD The idea for that song came from the movie *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. "Fade to Black" worked well, and we wanted to have another slow, clean, picking type of song, this time with a chorus. I had trouble singing that chorus. It's really high, and when I went to sing it in the studio, I remember Flemming looking at me like, "You're kidding." I said, "Shit, I don't know if I can do this!" So I ended up singing it lower than I intended, but we put a higher harmony on it and it worked pretty well. The riff for that song was lifted from some other band, who shall remain anonymous.

HAMMETT The beginning of the first solo is an arpeggiated ninth chord figure, where I basically mirror what James is playing. The second guitar figure had some harmonies. I used a wah-wah pedal on the third solo, which was pretty straight ahead. The fourth solo comes out of harmonized guitars; the very last lick was based on something really cool I saw Cliff play on guitar in the hotel one night that I knew would work in that spot.



REHEARSING FOR THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, IN BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND, 1986

"MASTER OF PUPPETS"
MASTER OF PUPPETS

HETFIELD I think we wanted to write another song like "Creeping Death," with open chords carried by the vocals and a real catchy chorus. On *Master of Puppets* we started getting into the longer, more orchestrated songs. It was more of a challenge to write a long song that didn't seem long. The riff for that song was pretty messy—constantly moving. It works good live. People love to scream "Master!" a couple of times.

HAMMETT I used my Jackson Randy Rhoads V for this solo. When you listen to the solo, there's this weird sound right after the mellow part where it sounds like I'm hitting a superhigh note in the midst of my phrasing, like I'm fretting the string against the pickup. Well, what happened was, I had accidentally pulled the string off the fretboard! You know how you take an E string, you pull it down toward the floor away from the neck? I accidentally pulled down on the string, and it fretted out on the side of the fretboard. We heard it back, and I was like, "That's brilliant! We've gotta keep that!" Of course, I've never been able to reproduce that since; it was like a magic moment that was captured on tape. That was one of my most favorite things about that guitar solo. I thought I had screwed the solo up by accidentally pulling on the string, but once I heard it back, I thought it sounded great. That was definitely a keeper!

For the next solo we used backward guitar parts. To get them I played a bunch of guitar parts that were in the same key as the song and laid them down on quarter-inch tape. Then we flipped the tape over and edited it, so we had two or three minutes of backward guitar. We put it in the last verse of the song.

A lot of people think I actually came into my own sound on that song. That had everything to do with buying Mesa/Boogie Mark II-C heads. Boogie made those heads for a short time in the mid Eighties and only made a limited amount of them. They moved on after that, and they haven't really been able to recapture that sound since—I don't know if they ever tried or not. But there's something about Boogie Mark II-C heads that were really unique and very individual in their gain stages and overall sound. Most of *Master of Puppets* was tracked with Boogie heads and Marshall heads combined, and I used my

ROSS HALFIN

Gibson Flying V and my Jackson. By that time, I also had my black Fernandes Stratocaster.

THE $5.98 E.P.: GARAGE DAYS RE-REVISITED (1987)

HETFIELD Putting out an EP of all cover tunes was absolutely unheard of, which we thought was really cool. We didn't do too many arrangements, except to some of the Budgie tunes, where we eliminated some lame singing parts. For some of the songs we tuned down to D to make them a little heavier. The guitar sound is really awful, but it was the first thing we put out where the bass could be heard, so Jason [*Newsted, bassist*] was happy.

HAMMETT That was recorded when I first started using ESP guitars with EMG pickups. All the lead guitar parts on that EP flowed really quickly. I did them in two nights. All of the leads were mine. The fact that the original versions of "Helpless" and "The Wait" don't even have solos in them was a bit of luck—no one would have anything to compare them to, and it kept any preconceived ideas out of my head. We did that EP for the fans, just for fun, and Elektra loved it and released it.

"...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL" ...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL (1988)

HETFIELD That song is pretty long, like all the songs on that album. We wanted to write shorter material, but it never happened. We were into packing songs with riffs. The whole riff is very percussive; it goes right along with the drums. The singing on that song is a lot lower than usual.

HAMMETT I worked out an opening lick for the solo but it wasn't really happening, so I plugged in the wah-wah pedal, which I always do when all else fails. As soon as I plugged in, we were done. A lot of people give me shit about how I hide behind the wah pedal, but something about it brings out a lot of aggression. It just tailors the sound to match the mood and emotion I'm trying to convey. It's purely an aesthetic thing and not a crutch or anything like that. The riff where I utilize the open string hammer-ons developed from a Gary Moore lick that I'd been studying. I figured it would sound really good combined with the heavy E-chord progression.

"ONE" ...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

HETFIELD I had been fiddling around with that A-G modulation for a long time. The idea for the opening came from a Venom song called "Buried Alive." The kick drum machine-gun part near the end wasn't written with the war lyrics in mind, it just came out that way. We started that album with Mike Clink as producer. He didn't work out too well, so we got Flemming to come over and save our asses.

HAMMETT I lost a *lot* of sleep over that set of guitar solos! [*laughs*] The main guitar solo at the end, with the right-hand, Eddie Van Halen–type tapping came almost immediately. That guitar solo was just a breeze; what was going on with the rhythm section in that part of the song was just very, very exciting for me to solo over. The first solo was a little bit more worked out. I heard James playing some really melodic stuff over the intro, just doodling around, and I thought, That's pretty cool, I'm gonna use part of that. So I have to give credit to James for subliminally pushing me in that melodic direction. I think the first two licks at the top of the first solo are his, and the rest of the solo just sort of fell into place. That little chord comp thing in that first solo came from a major-chord exercise that I do all the time. I thought it would sound really good in the solo if I just staccato-picked it and resolved it right there. I thought the solo needed something to perk people's ears up!

The middle guitar solo in that song, I must have recorded and rerecorded it about 15 million times. I wanted a middle ground between the really melodic solo at the beginning and the fiery solo at the end. I wanted that to sit very confidently within the song, but it sounded very unconfident, and I was never happy with it.

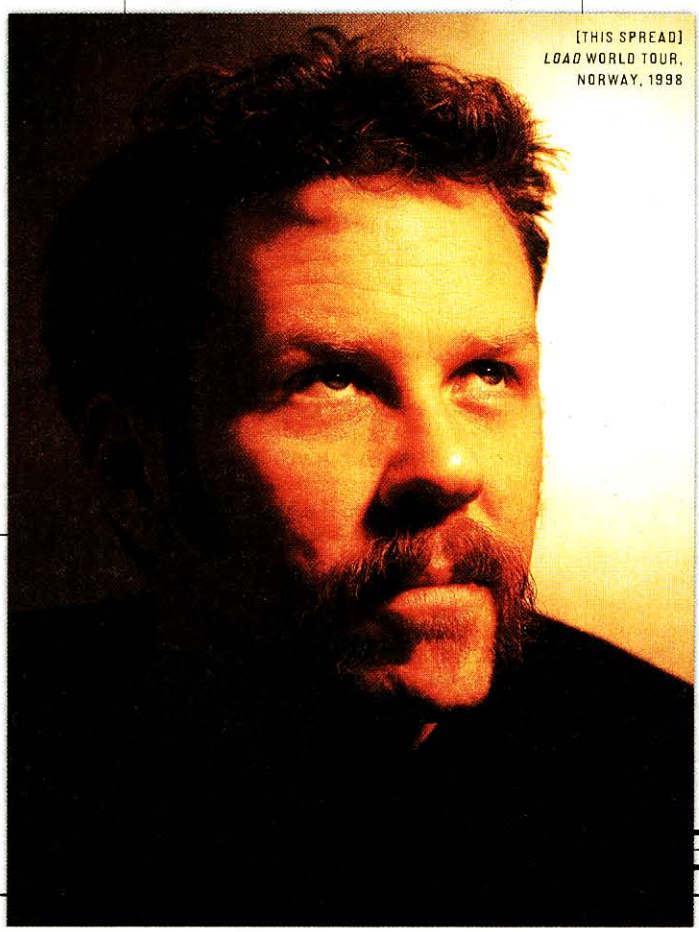
Finally, it came down to the wire: we were mixing the album while simultaneously touring on the Monsters of Rock tour. One night, I flew from Philadelphia to New York City, and while everyone else was on their way to Washington, D.C., I went to the Hit Factory and rerecorded the solo again. I brought my guitar, I had one of my main amps sent to the studio, and I redid the solo there and finally nailed it. I was very, very happy about that! The next day, we played a show in Washington, D.C. It got panned by the critics, because we'd all only had about three hours of sleep and were exhausted. But I got a good solo the night before, so it was worth it!

We wanted a clean guitar sound for "One." I think at that point I was using the ESP neck-through-body KH-1 guitar, with the skulls on the fingerboard. I'd gotten that guitar in '88 and used it pretty prominently in the studio. I used an ADA preamp and an ADA MP-1—it was a programmable digital amp that had tubes in it, with a separate rackmounted Aphex parametric EQ. I remember blending that thing with the Boogies for lead sounds and clean sounds. The clean sound on "One" was done almost exclusively with the ADA MP-1.

"ENTER SANDMAN" METALLICA (1991)

HAMMETT Again, I was playing my ESP with a wah pedal, and this time I used a bunch of different amps. We were combining Boogies and modified Marshalls; I also think we had a clean old Fender in there, and maybe even an old Vox amp, and they were all blended together to get that tone. I can remember getting that lead guitar sound together very quickly, very spontaneously. When it came time to start thinking about that guitar solo, I just thought, Well, this is a great guitar song, and it's in the spirit of all my favorite guitar bands, like Thin Lizzy and UFO, but kind of modernized. So I kept thinking, Michael Schenker, Michael Schenker... But then I started thinking, If Brian Robertson from Thin Lizzy played on this song, what would *he* play? With that mindset, I started playing what I thought Brian Robertson would play on a song like that, and the entire fucking guitar solo wrote itself!

You know how the guitar solo plays out, and then there's a lead guitar break that leads into a breakdown? I think the time has come to tell where I actually got that lick. It's from "Magic Man" by Heart, but I didn't get it from Heart's version; I got it from a cut off Ice-T's *Power* album, where he used it as a sample. I was listening to *Power* a lot while we were recording *Metallica*, so I kept on hearing that lick. I thought, I have to snake this! I did change it around a little bit, though.



[THIS SPREAD] *LOAD* WORLD TOUR, NORWAY, 1998

ALL PHOTOS BY ROSS HALFIN

"DON'T TREAD ON ME"
METALLICA

HETFIELD A lot of the songs on this album are more simple and concentrated. They tell the same story as our other shit but don't take as long. There aren't a hundred riffs to latch on to—just two or three stock, really good riffs in each song.

I used my ESPs and tons of other guitars: a 12-string electric, a Telecaster, a Gretsch White Falcon, a sitar and other things. I also used a B-Bender, a bar installed in the guitar that twists the B string up a full step. It's used a lot in country music. But "Don't Tread" is just real heavy guitar—there's really nothing else to it.

HAMMETT I used a Bradshaw [*preamp*] because the mids were clean and the low end sounded real percussive, and I put it through a VHT power amp. The harmonic distortion also sounded nice and dirty. For the highs we used two Marshalls. We combined all the sounds and put it all through Marshall cabinets with 30-watt speakers and blended all the room mics. My sound is a lot thicker and punchier than before, and I think it's better than ever. For the majority of the leads on this album I used a third ESP guitar. I also used my 1989 black Gibson Les Paul Custom. For the clean sound, I used a '61 stock white Strat and a Fender blackface Deluxe. I also used a '53 Gibson ES-295 style, and an ESP Les Paul Junior with EMG pickups.

I used the '89 black Gibson Les Paul Custom and a wah-wah pedal on "Don't Tread on Me." At one point I had to play these ascending lead fills, and it just wasn't happening at all. So I wound up playing harmonics instead of lead guitar fills, and it worked really well.

"THE CUD THAT FAILED"
METALLICA

HETFIELD That's a very nice song. Slow, heavy and ugly. There are a lot of single-note riffs and more open-chord shit on this album. A lot of the rhythms I came up with were a little too complicated—half-step changes and other weirdo shit that Kirk had trouble soloing over. So we simplified some things. All the harmony guitar stuff on this album is incorporated in the rhythm tracks. I played rhythm all the way through, then I overdubbed harmony guitar things. There are harmony solos and harmony guitar in the rhythms, but they're very distinct from each other. We found that layering a guitar six times doesn't make it heavy.

HAMMETT I had this whole thing worked out, but it didn't fit because the lead was too bluesy for the song, which is characterized by real heavy riffing and chording. So producer Bob Rock and I worked out a melody, to which I suggested that we add a harmony part, but Bob said it would only pretty it up. So we ended up playing the melody an octave higher, and it sounded great. We basically mapped out the whole solo, picking the best parts from about 15 solos I'd worked out. It's one of my favorite solos on the album.

One thing I did on this album that I hadn't done before was play guitar fills. I filled up holes—like when James stops during the vocal, I put in a little stab or, as Bob calls it, a "sting." My solos on this album are a little offbeat. Though a lot of guitar players start the solo on the downbeat—the first beat of the measure—I come in on the upbeat of the third measure of a bar, like on "Enter Sandman" and "Don't Tread on Me."

"HERO OF THE DAY"
LOAD (1996)

HAMMETT The first time James heard my solo on "Hero of the Day," he didn't like it. He said, "It sounds like bad Brian Robertson!" [*laughs*] I was, like, "What do you mean?" And then, after much "debating" back and forth, we kind of agreed that it wasn't so much the solo that was the problem but the lack of anything going on underneath it. So he went and put something down underneath it that made it sound, well, a little better to his ears, I guess. It was one of those things where one musician hears one thing one way and another musician hears it completely different.

For the *Load* album, I was experimenting so much with tone that I had to keep journals on what equipment I was using. For "Hero of the Day," I know I used a 1958 Les Paul Standard with a Matchless Chieftain, some Boogie amps and a Vox amp—again, they're all blended. I was listening to a lot of David Bowie at the time, particularly the sounds on *Low*, and I was really interested in playing guitar *parts* to see if I could shape the character of the song by playing parts instead of solos. And to a certain degree that's what I was trying to do during "Hero of the Day." It's a guitar solo in the classic sense, but it's a part of the song as well. I was very into the idea of creating soundscapes and crafting textures. I was tired of playing ripping, shredding solos; I wasn't into proving myself like I was around, say, *...And Justice for All*. It's great to be able to have that in your back pocket and use it when necessary. But for the most part, taste, tone and atmosphere are my main concerns.

I'll tell you a funny story, though. In '94, a guy came up to me and said, "How come you stopped doing double stops? You used to play a lot of double stops, and then you stopped doing it. I miss it." And when we were recording *Load*, all of a sudden I remembered him saying that. I thought, Yeah, you know, he's right! So in that song "Better Than You," which ended up on *ReLoad*, I just crammed both solos with all sorts of double stops. And that was totally for that guy.

"NO LEAF CLOVER"
S&M (1999)

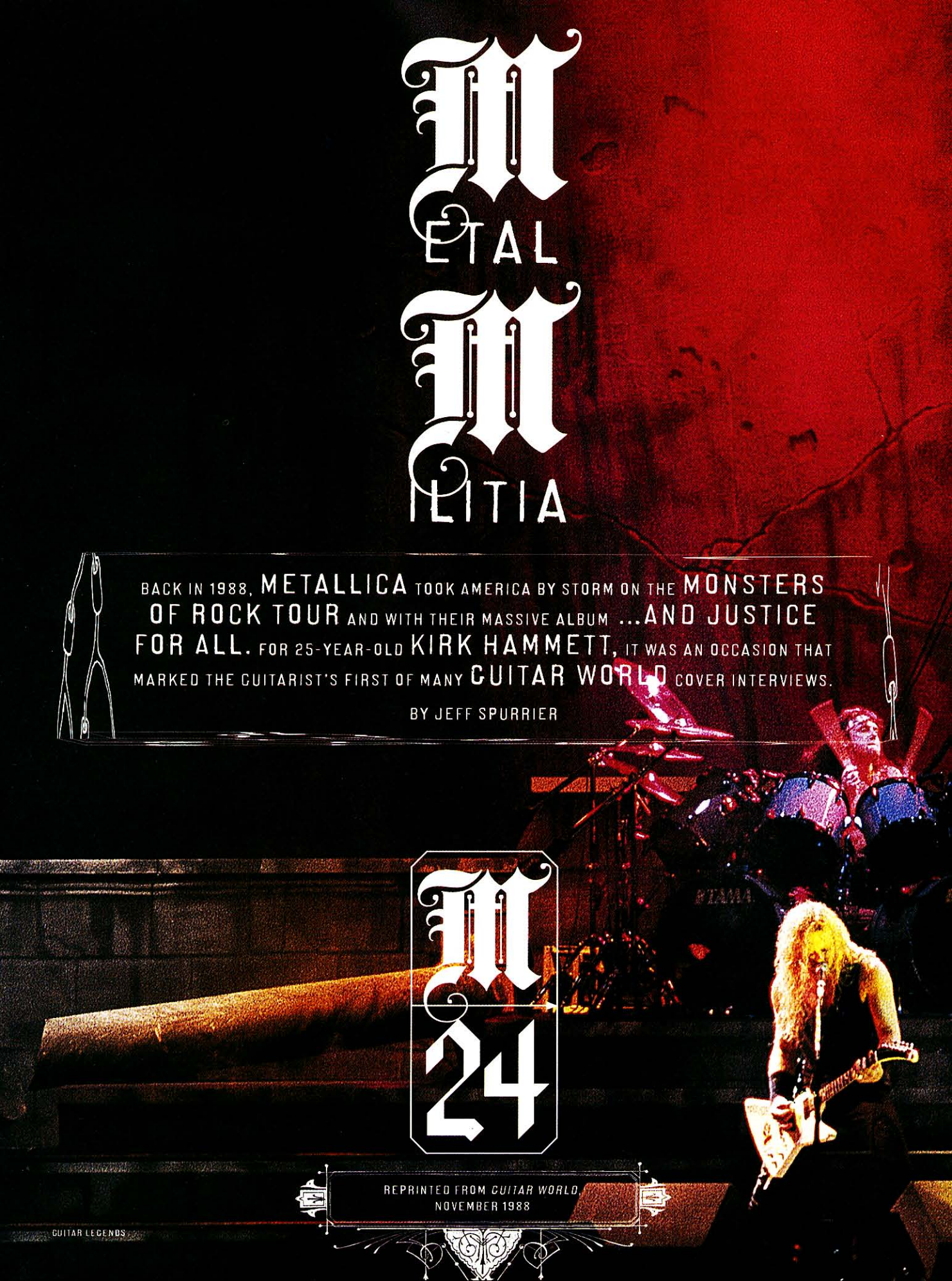
HAMMETT That song came together only about a week before we actually played with the symphony. And that week leading up to the actual dates was so hectic. We had to do so much footwork that I really didn't have as much time as I would have liked to spend on that solo. So I thought, Hell, I'll just go for it and improvise! And what you hear on that track is just me improvising, and playing off the top of my head on my ESP "Mummy" guitar. I mainly used my live rig, which consists of Boogies and Marshalls and Boogie cabinets. My rackmounted wah is in there, and that's about it, other than maybe just a touch of delay.

There's a modulation toward the end of the solo, and I kind of wanted to outline that modulation a little bit. That's why I shift keys for the four or eight bars at the end. The solo on "No Leaf Clover" is actually comped from the best licks from both nights and made into one solo. In retrospect, I would have loved to have had more time to structure it and put it together. But we were on a deadline, blah blah blah, and we really didn't want to rerecord anything—we wanted it to all be recorded with the symphony. So we just kind of went for it.

METAL MILITIA

BACK IN 1988, METALLICA TOOK AMERICA BY STORM ON THE MONSTERS OF ROCK TOUR AND WITH THEIR MASSIVE ALBUM ...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL. FOR 25-YEAR-OLD KIRK HAMMETT, IT WAS AN OCCASION THAT MARKED THE GUITARIST'S FIRST OF MANY GUITAR WORLD COVER INTERVIEWS.

BY JEFF SPURRIER



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REPRINTED FROM *GUITAR WORLD*, NOVEMBER 1988

TO ANY METALLICA MANIAC, the chain of events that transpired during the band's set at the L.A. Coliseum Monsters of Rock show was about as predictable as the clichéd, ham-fisted riffs churned out by the other acts on the bill. During Metallica's third song, an estimated 15,000 fans breached the wire barricade set up around the floor of the arena. Under the blistering midafternoon sun, the metal militia battered down a fence and rushed the stage in a lemming-like onslaught that left the yellow-jacketed security guards running for cover. "AlcoholicA," read one of the banners unfurled among the mass of bodies. "Drink 'Em All," read another, a pun on the band's debut album, *Kill 'Em All*, as well as the group's dipsomaniacal reputation.

Throughout Metallica's performance, objects rained in from the crowd: shoes, hats, plastic spritzer bottles, shirts. At one point, drummer Lars Ulrich leaned over his drum riser at the rear of the stage and caught with one hand a thong sandal headed his way. He held it up like a trophy, grinned devilishly and gave a thumbs-up sign before throwing it back.

As the band played on, the frenzy of the audience shifted into overdrive, and soon the plastic chairs used for seating on the arena floor were being passed overhead toward the stage. Pieces of the chairs came flying in with the shoes and hats until finally a whole chair was thrown, nearly hitting singer James Hetfield. At that moment, the PA system conveniently gave out and the band quickly retired to the backstage area while efforts were made to defuse the near-riot mood.

After the band left the stage, thousands streamed out of the stadium,

ROSS HALFIN

ON THE *JUSTICE* TOUR, AT LONDON'S HAMMERSMITH ODEON, OCTOBER 11, 1988

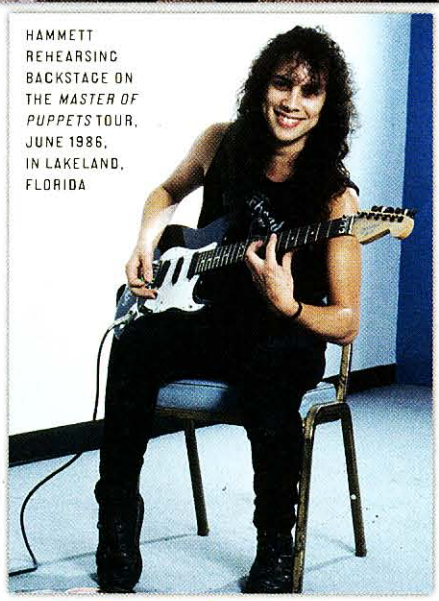
THE PHOTO SESSION FOR THE *CAPAGE DAYS* EP, TAKEN BACKSTAGE IN GERMANY

many stopping to buy $18 Metallica T-shirts from the concession stands. And although it was still early—Dokken, the Scorpions and Van Halen were still to come—some of the fans didn't bother to stick around.

"Metallica is why I came," said one 20-year-old Long Beacher. "I don't even know if I'm going to go back in. They kicked ass! They don't have copped-out attitudes. Their music is so perfect, and they're not a bunch of assholes. They've mastered what they do. They're speed metal, but they have melodic things in there too, which you don't see from a lot of speed metal bands. Usually it's just straight-out thrash. There's nobody to compare Kirk Hammett to—except maybe Randy Rhoads."

If you had to pick someone to inherit the mantle of fallen metal legend Randy Rhoads, you couldn't find a more unlikely candidate than 25-year-old Kirk Hammett. But then, there's little about Metallica that fits neatly preconceived notions. Although Metallica are one of the leading proponents of speed metal, the band has distinguished itself from its peers with complex song structures, issue-oriented lyrics, long songs that defy handy radio formatting and an appreciation for melody even within the over-amped environment of metal, a genre not known for subtlety. With their reliance upon word-of-mouth popularity and a casual, down-to-earth style, the band has become a true grassroots phenomenon. Considering the wild enthusiasm evident at the Monsters shows, critics are already predicting that the band's next album, ... *And Justice for All*, will hit Number One.

The key, says Hammett, is originality. "We've gotten as far as we have because we offer something different," he says. "There were bands like Motörhead and Diamond Head doing this before us; we were just at the right place at the right time. There are a lot of thrash metal bands



HAMMETT REHEARSING BACKSTAGE ON THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, JUNE 1986, IN LAKELAND, FLORIDA

"PEOPLE WHO LISTEN TO THE RADIO PROBABLY AREN'T OUR TYPE OF CROWD."

that wouldn't even think of doing a ballad. We've had a ballad on every album since [*1984*'s] *Ride the Lightning*. We're not afraid to try different things, like slowing down arrangements or not screaming all the time or singing real melodies."

In a hotel room the day after the L.A. Coliseum show, Hammett sits back on the sofa and props his legs up on a coffee table. With his hair pulled back, his glasses on and a whisper of a mustache, he looks much younger than his actual age. Somewhat shy and self-effacing, Hammett doesn't come across like one might expect one of speed metal's leading lights to. At the previous day's red-hot performance he performed arpeggios and three-octave scales with casual aplomb. In person, however, he seems guilelessly insecure, readily acknowledging his ongoing struggle to blend technical expertise with the band's herky-jerky tempos and convoluted song structure. There's no posturing, no canned answers, no self-aggrandizement. In fact, one of the first things he says is that the spotlight on him should be broadened to include rhythm guitarist James Hetfield.

Hammett started playing guitar 10 years ago while a teenager in the small San Francisco Bay-area town of El Sobrante. Like fledgling players everywhere, he spent years trying to find the right combination of components that would give him the perfect sound. His first rig, "a piece-of-shit Montgomery Ward's electric guitar and a cardboard shoe-box amp with a four-inch speaker," was abandoned after a few weeks. He borrowed a neighbor's Stella, played it for a few years and then got his first real guitar, a 1978 Strat.

"I could never get a full sound out of it," he recalls, "mostly because I was playing through shit amps. I did a lot of experimenting with it, putting in different pickups. I tried DiMarzios, Bill Lawrence humbuckers and some others. I never knew that full sound I heard on records

TOP: ROSS HALFIN; BOTTOM: MARK WEISS

was coming through beefed-up Marshalls. Later, I managed to get hold of a Randall bass amp, but I still wasn't successful. Then I got a Sunn amp with CMOS technology and solid-state distortion, and that was it—I finally had that overdriven, distorted sound. I traded in my Strat and for $200 more I got a '74 Gibson Flying V. I had just discovered Michael Schenker and thought he was great."

With his Flying V (which he still frequently uses on record) and Sunn amp, Hammett started playing in bands, only to face a new problem. The sound became too distorted. After a stint at Burger King, he earned enough money to buy a Marshall half-stack and finally found the right mix.

Metallica recruited him to join just before the band made its first album, 1983's *Kill 'Em All*. "I played my first gig with them a week later on the East Coast, and actually, they never told me I was in the band," he says with a laugh. "After we were in the studio making the album, I figured I was in."

Around the same time, Hammett met up with the person who would drastically alter his approach to the guitar: Berkeley guitar teacher Joe Satriani.

"In 1982 and 1983, the heavy metal scene in San Francisco was really healthy and fruitful. There were a lot of bands and a lot of competition between guitar players. I found out then that there were two types of [*metal*] guitar players: your basic Eddie Van Halen clone and your stylized heavy metal player. I didn't want to become a Van Halen clone. And there was this one guitar player [*on the club circuit*] whose style I really liked. He was doing arpeggios and three-octave solos, so I asked him where he learned his stuff. He told me about Joe, so I called him and started taking lessons from him. I took about 20 lessons over five years."

For the first time, Hammett was learning how and why certain metal guitarists chose certain scales and riffs. Satriani explained why some licks worked and why others didn't. "Eventually," Hammett recalls, "I stopped bringing him stuff to show me and we just concentrated on theory. We studied chord chemistry, modes, how to build scales off of different degrees and chord progressions. [*The results of the lessons*] became really apparent in 1984 and 1985. That was when my whole style really changed. He showed me how to harmonize with the band. And I've been applying what I learned from Joe over the last four years. After a while, the band couldn't tell what was influenced by Joe and what wasn't."

Satriani isn't the only guitarist Hammett cites as inspirational; Jimi Hendrix, Ulrich Roth and Michael Schenker all are on his list of influences. In fact, he says, he admires just about anybody who plays "a really good guitar solo."

And what's that?

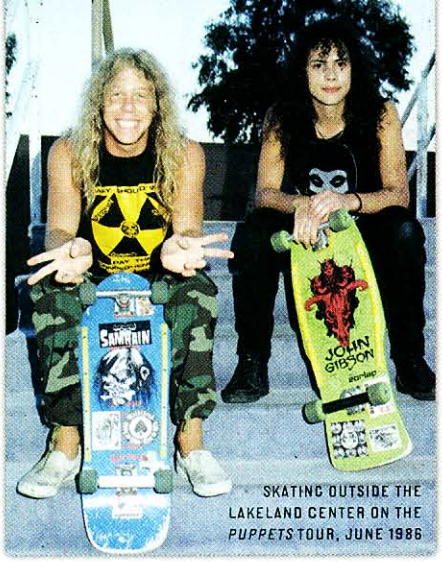
"Something that's melodic, intense, aggressive and has hooks in it," he says. "Someone like George Lynch has a really bluesy feel in the middle of all these pyrotechnics. He'll do these wild hammer-ons and sweep arpeggios and then go into something really melodic that harmonizes. Gary Moore can also be really melodic and intense at the same time. And Steve Vai—he has a huge sense of humor in his playing, like he's cracking jokes with his guitar. And Joe—he has a lot of melody and he's really catchy and dynamic. That's so important. It's like the old saying of trying to tell a story with your guitar. It's a cliché, but it's true."

Even after his years of study with Satriani, Hammett admits that he's still not totally confident with his technique. When he's off the road, he plays constantly—immediately after waking up, during the afternoon, watching TV at night—and captures anything he likes on a Fostex four-track recorder.

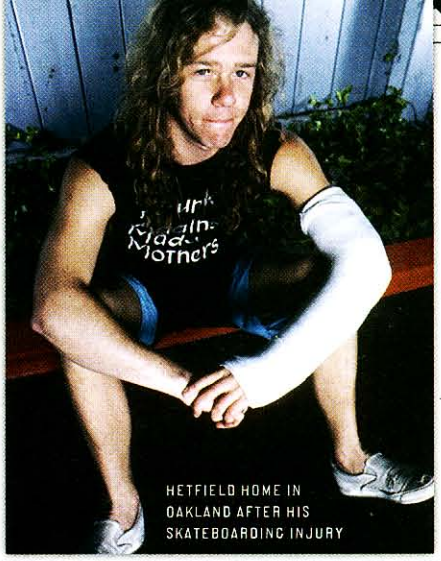
Hammett always begins these workouts with exercises. "Scales, arpeggios, chromatic exercises—although I have trouble memorizing scales," he admits. "Especially three-octave modes. They're the hardest to memorize when you play them in cycles of fourths. Before we go onstage, I'll go through my modes in cycles of fourths and jam on parts of songs, trying to come up with something new. I practice scales every day, at least until I feel warmed up."

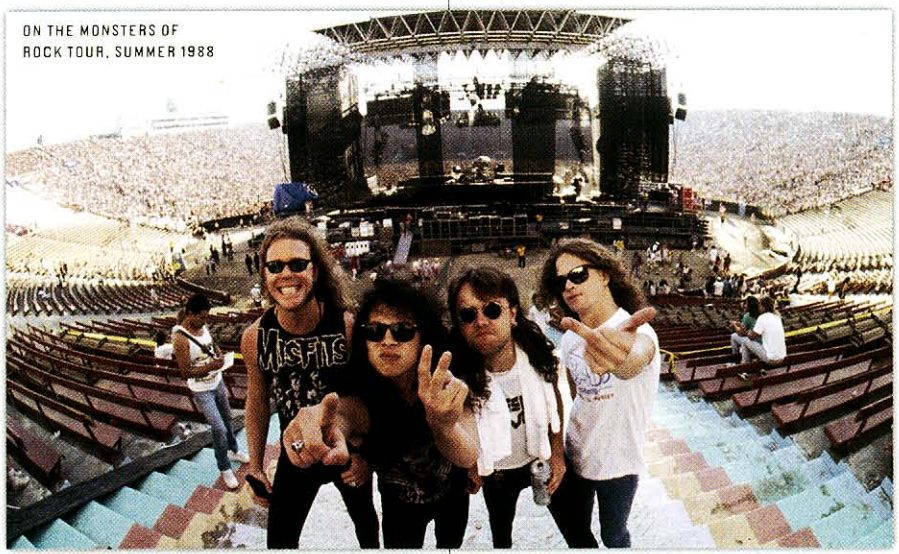
No amount of warming up eased the pressure the band felt going in to record their latest release. During the *...And Justice for All* sessions, Metallica were getting ready for the Monsters of Rock tour, and rather than enjoying his usual relaxed schedule to polish his solos, Hammett found himself working long hours trying to make things work.

"From a technical point of view, this album was a nightmare," he grimaces. "There were so many tempo changes. James would come up with a rhythm background, and the only scale that would fit would be a minor pentatonic scale with a flatted fifth. Trying to be melodic in an altered scale like that was a nightmare. In

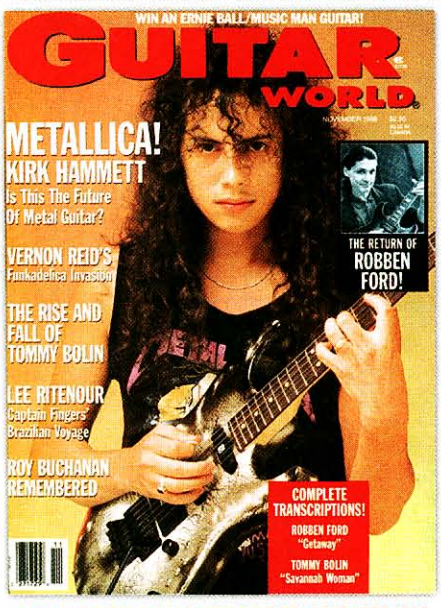


SKATING OUTSIDE THE LAKELAND CENTER ON THE *PUPPETS* TOUR, JUNE 1986


HETFIELD HOME IN OAKLAND AFTER HIS SKATEBOARDING INJURY



ON THE MONSTERS OF ROCK TOUR, SUMMER 1988



HAMMETT'S FIRST *GUITAR WORLD* COVER, NOVEMBER 1988

TOP LEFT: MARK WEISS; TOP RIGHT, MIDDLE, AND BOTTOM: ROSS HALFIN

'Blackened,' there are four tempo and rhythm background changes, and for me to make it smooth all the way through was really challenging. To this day, I don't think I did it successfully.

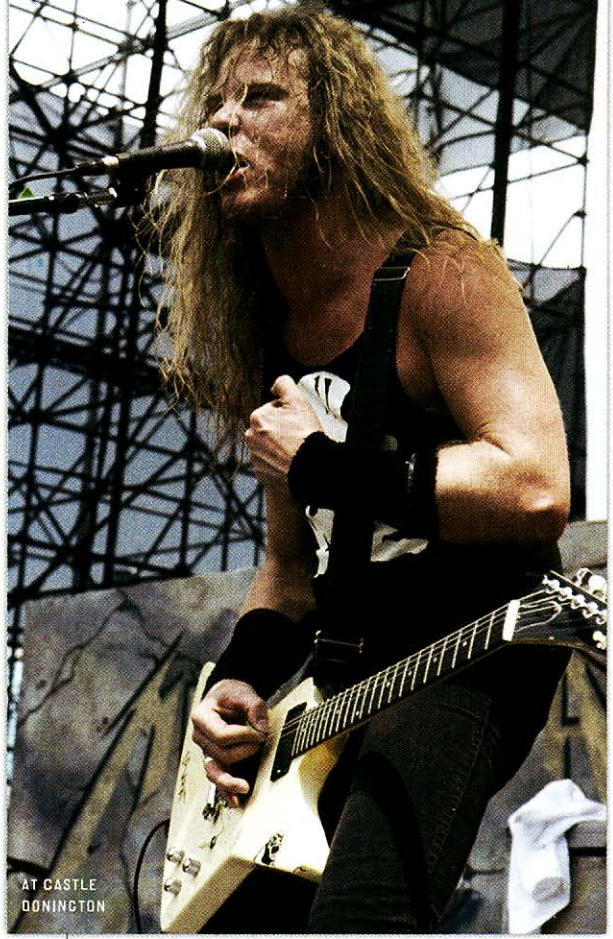
"There's something about being in the studio, in the heat of the moment when the red light goes on, that just makes you want to change things around," he continues. "After playing to rehearsal tapes for three months where it's slightly out of tempo and the recording isn't the best, suddenly you're in there hearing perfect drum tracks, perfect guitar tracks—everything is picture perfect. It really bothers me. I did all my leads for the album in seven days because I had to. The Monsters tour was coming up. When you do stuff that quickly, you settle for something, and when you go back and listen to it you may discover it's not happening. Things sound forced. I was working 16 hours a day doing solos, and when you work that long you start to lose your perspective. Your ear goes down the drain."

There was one aspect to the *Justice* recording that was not a nightmare for Hammett: getting the tone he wanted from his guitar. Unlike the *Master of Puppets* session, when he spent three days in the studio trying to get the right sound, this time the tone came a little easier.

"I knew what I wanted," he says. "During *Master*, I wasn't 100 percent sure. There's nothing more discouraging than working on something for eight hours and at the end of the session knowing it's crap. I think the guitar tones on this album are some of the better lead tones I've gotten. The rhythm sound that James got is amazing. We didn't have time to do anything super weird, which I wanted to do. I wanted to experiment a lot more."

The *Justice* recording contrasts sharply with *The $5.98 E.P.: Garage Days Re-Revisited*, the band's 1987 five-song compilation of British heavy metal and punk covers. The EP was released following a pair of nearly devastating incidents: the death of original bassist Cliff Burton in a bus accident in Sweden and a skateboarding injury that left Hetfield with a broken arm. The imposed hiatus found the band members getting back to their roots in a converted garage in Oakland, jamming on old Misfits and Diamond Head songs. The EP was recorded in six days with little concern for mistakes, bad notes or feedback. It's certainly not one of the best-recorded metal albums, but it is immediately seductive for its charm and youthful naiveté. It feels like an extension of one of Metallica's off-time country jams, when they get together with their friends in the Bay area, retreat to a ranch outside the city and play wild garage tribal thrash long into the night.

Comparing *Garage Days* to *...And Justice for All* is like watching a time-lapsed film of a plant emerging from a seed. There's maturity, sophistication and a sense of direction present in songs like "Blackened," "One" and "Dyers Eve" that should propel Metallica out of cult status into mainstream popularity. Despite speed metal's teenage aura, Metallica are clearly not just for the angst-and-acne set. The attitude that emerges from their lyrics, personal style and musical technique shows that this is a band that refuses to play down—either to themselves or their audience.



AT CASTLE DONINGTON

"I'm not into that whole Satanic thing," Hammett says, obviously embarrassed by the symbolism some metal bands employ. "It's something to fall back on if you don't have much imagination. Singing your 50th song about having lunch with Satan—I'm not into it. It's silly."

On the other hand, Metallica's lyrics, which are penned by Hetfield, do work. Containing themes of nuclear destruction, censorship and McCarthy-era "witch hunts," they are frequently bleak and stark, but it's not just for shock value. The band insists on having a lyric sheet on the inner sleeve of its albums so that its audience gets the message. "With heavy music you should have heavy lyrics," Hammett says. "Not just, 'Hey baby, let's drink a lot and puke on each other all night!' "

A good example is "One," from *...And Justice for All*, which was inspired by Dalton Trumbo's classic antiwar story, *Johnny Got His Gun*. "'One' is one of my favorite songs on that album," Hammett says. "I thought we captured the entire mood and the chain of events told in the book." The song "The Shortest Straw" is about the anti-Communist investigations led by U.S. senator Joseph McCarthy in the Fifties, which led to the blacklisting of many writers and entertainers. "Something like [*McCarthyism*] almost happened with the PMRC," Hammett says, referring to the Parents Music Resource Center cofounded by Tipper Gore in 1985, which pushed the music industry to use parental-warning labels on products that contain explicit lyrics. "If Tipper Gore's husband [*Al Gore*] hadn't been running for president, I think it would have gotten a lot worse. They had a picture of us in her book and the caption was, 'This band promotes alcohol.' It was pretty funny, actually."

As Hammett speaks, MTV flickers from a silent TV nearby, and he stares blankly at the sight of a popular glam band prancing around the stage, all flash and makeup. "For a band that doesn't play very well, they sure do have a lot of guitars," he mutters.

Like his bandmates, Kirk Hammett doesn't believe in setting himself up on a pedestal, removed from the fans. Their following has been built by word of mouth, not hype or MTV or radio play. There was some discussion before *Justice* was completed about recording shorter songs—the shortest song on *Master of Puppets* is over five minutes, while others are over eight minutes long—but the ultimate decision was to go with what they like. Demographically, Hammett says, "People who listen to the radio probably aren't our type of crowd."

> "THE RHYTHM SOUND THAT JAMES GOT ON THIS ALBUM IS AMAZING."

Similarly, jumping on bandwagons or following trends is simply not the Metallica way. After some persistent probing, Hammett admits that he does have some classical influences, but he doesn't like talking about them.

"Everyone says, 'Oh, I'm a heavy metal guitarist, but I'm classically influenced,' " he groans. "It's so trendy that I hate to talk about it. But one of my favorite all-time albums is *Christopher Parkening Plays Bach*. I love that. I went to see him with some friends seven months ago, and he was brilliant."

But is Kirk Hammett as brilliant in his chosen field? It's hard to say just yet. There's no doubt that the technical prowess is there; but as he himself concludes, that's not all there is to it.

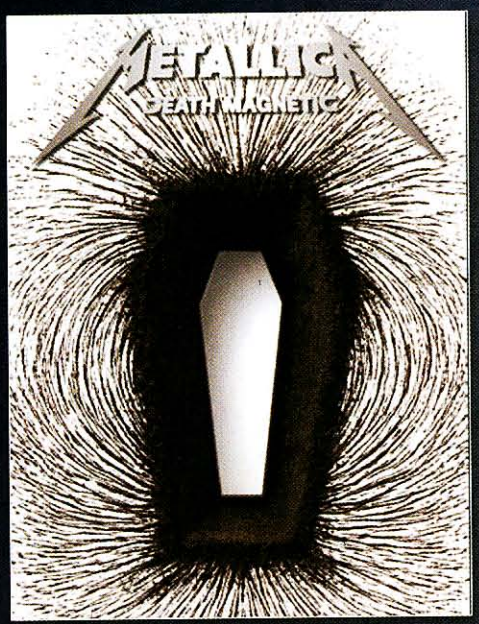
"It's weird," he says, somewhat wearily. "I've found that, with all this study of technique, when you get right down to it, you throw all that out the window and go with what works best. I believe you have to have technique, but it's also good to detach yourself from all of it and go with what feels good. Just because you know umpteen billion scales, it doesn't mean you have to use them all in a solo."

It's just such an awareness that filters out the technicians from the artists, and Kirk Hammett seems to have the humility and love of his instrument to propel him into genuine superstardom. He's only 25, so who knows? GI

ROSS HALFIN

AVAILABLE NOW!

METALLICA



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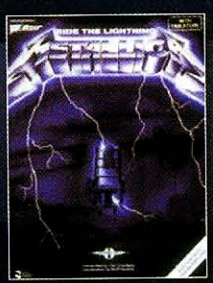

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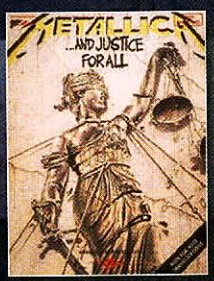

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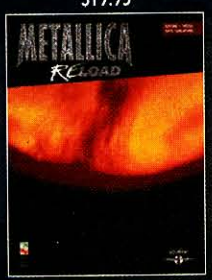

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MASTERPIECE

IN THE EARLY EIGHTIES **METALLICA** WERE CONSIDERED BY THEIR PEERS TO BE YOUNG, LOUD DICKHEADS IN CHEAP DENIM. WITH THE RELEASE OF THEIR 1986 EPIC, **MASTER OF PUPPETS**, THEY WERE DECLARED GENIUSES—YOUNG, LOUD, DICK-HEADED GENIUSES.

BY MICK WALL

M30

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ROSS HALFIN

AN OUTTAKE FROM THE SESSION THAT PRODUCED THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* BACK COVER PHOTO. SHOT IN SAN FRANCISCO NEAR THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE.

KIRK HAMMETT CASTS his mind back, sighs and, in a voice as quiet and flickering as a church candle, puts it like this: "I really felt that *Master of Puppets* was the album that defined that lineup—James, Lars, Cliff and I. Ninety-nine percent of it was conceived by the four of us. We had gotten to know each other's musical capabilities and temperaments over the three-year period we'd been together, and I could tell that it was really blossoming into something to be reckoned with. Every song we came up with was another great conception. Still, we never thought for a minute we'd still be talking about it 20 years later."

And with good reason. At the time of the album's release, in March 1986, Metallica were well outside the margins of mainstream rock. Dee Snider of Twisted Sister, for whom Metallica opened in 1984, delivered the consensus opinion when he said the band members were "a nice bunch of kids" but there was "no way" they were ever going to make it. Consisting of Hammett, guitarist and singer James Hetfield, bassist Cliff Burton and drummer Lars Ulrich, Metallica were the sort of band that appealed to the self-obsessed skate-heads and thrash kids that wrote for and read the fanzines. As such, they and their music were good fun. The thought that they could be as significant as Iron Maiden and Judas Priest was laughable.

Master of Puppets changed those perceptions considerably. It was a pivotal release in every sense, for both Metallica and the rock scene they almost single-handedly transformed. Whether most mainstream rock critics actually understood the album or not—and most didn't—Metallica's place at the cutting edge of American rock was indisputable within months of the album's release.

Certainly, the sense that something major had occurred was palpable among the group's fans. Like the first water

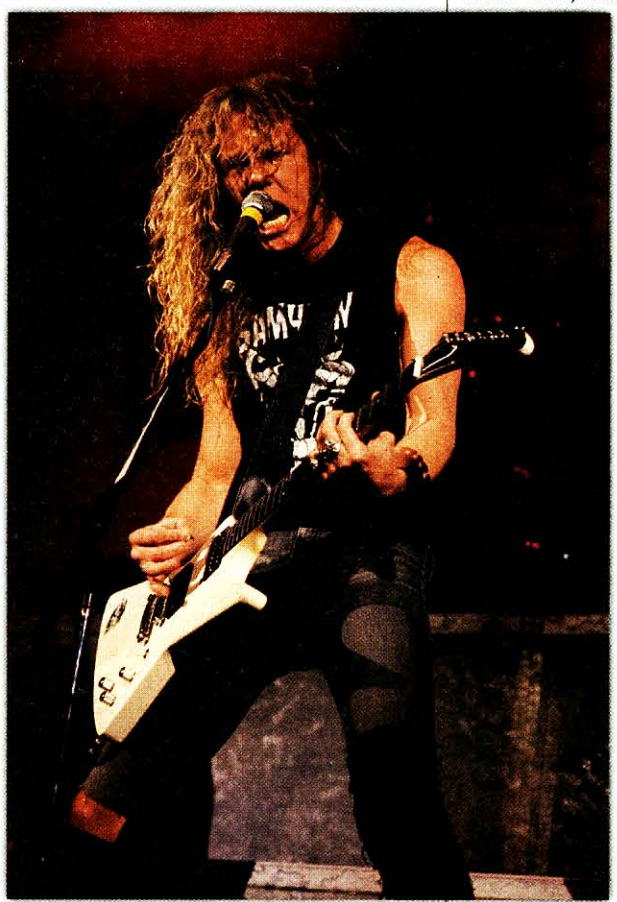
[THIS PAGE] MASTER OF PUPPETS TOUR, MAY 1986

breathers to flop accidentally onto land, they'd discovered Metallica in 1983 via their first album, the injudiciously titled *Kill 'Em All*, and fallen in love with its unequivocal thrash classics like the hilariously straight-faced "The Four Horsemen" and the neck-aching "Whiplash." Its follow-up, 1984's *Ride the Lightning*, had drawn them deeper under the group's spell with the stunning range of its ambitious songs and dynamic arrangements that fused thrash with acoustic, pseudo-classical and straight-ahead rock. Nothing on the album typified these qualities as well as the album-closing instrumental, "The Call of Ktulu," and the evocative ballad "Fade to Black."

With *Master of Puppets*, Metallica took the bold developments of *Ride the Lightning* and cranked them up considerably. The diverse musical elements that had so startled listeners on the previous record were seamlessly integrated over the new album's length, giving Metallica's sound even greater power and presence. Even the lyrics seemed to benefit from the group's newfound focus. Thematically, the songs formed a treatise on power and fear, populated with religious and military figures, monsters and frail humans consumed by addiction and rage. Creatively, *Master of Puppets* was not so much a leap beyond *Ride the Lightning* as it was a refinement of that album's strengths. But as refinements go, it proved impossible to ignore.

For the group's hardcore base, this was both good and bad news. Though blown away by the album's focus and its polished production, they lamented that Metallica had begun not only to splinter from their thrash base but also to migrate from rock's fringe and toward its commercial borders.

But then, as Ulrich, their chief mouthpiece, told me at the time, "Metallica was never just a thrash band anyway. I accept that we had a lot to do with the way that whole scene took off. We were the first band to sound like that. But we never thought of ourselves as a 'thrash band.' We were always an American band with British and European metal influences." Metallica's members had always said as much in their interviews,



he insisted. "It's just that until *Master of Puppets*, nobody took us seriously before."

It isn't hard to see why Metallica were roundly dismissed by the establishment in the years before *Master of Puppets*. Although they may not have been in the same league as Priest or Maiden, neither were they innovators of a new genre. As performers and songwriters, they were head and shoulders above their fellow Bay Area thrashers, but they came off as nerds in cheap denim, with tremble-tremble song titles like "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and "Seek and Destroy." With a few exceptions, their material was as ridiculously over the top as the moody "spaghetti western" music that preceded their shows. Apart from Burton, none of them had begun to assume the gravitas that would later characterize their public profile. Photos from this time are amateurishly silly: in one, Ulrich brandishes a pair of flaming drumsticks while pulling a suitably anguished face; in another, the group poses beside a giant vodka bottle stenciled with the word "Alcoholica."

It was at their shows, however, that one could see traces of Metallica's potential. Their downbeat image and sped-up sound were distinctly at odds with the prevailing, glammed-up rock fashions of the mid Eighties, as epitomized by big hair and eyeliner acts like Mötley Crüe and Ratt. As a result, despite the dickhead image and ultrametal song titles, they quickly forged a reputation for themselves where it really mattered—on the road.

Yet, even that wasn't enough to soften the shock when, halfway through the *Ride the Lightning* tour, Metallica signed a megabuck eight-album deal with Elektra. Subsequently, when management team Q-Prime, home to chart-busters Def Leppard, picked up Metallica, it was evident to everyone that something was going on. But just what, no one seemed to know.

Certainly, there was no sense of history in the making when I visited the band in Copenhagen during the making of *Master of Puppets* in December 1985. Metallica had been recording the album at Sweet Silence studios since September, and most of the hard work was finished. Swedish producer Flemming Rasmussen, who had also worked on *Ride the Lightning*, was running the sessions, and various studio dudes milled about: roadies, engineers, friends of friends. It was hard to tell who was actually in the band; they all looked and acted alike. There were no stars in the room in those days—just soldiers.

The group was staying at the SAS Hotel in Copenhagen; Hammett and Burton shared one room, while Ulrich and Hetfield—Metallica's guiding forces—bunked together in another. "We thought we were just on top of the world!" Hammett recalls today. "We had almost all the songs written long before we got there. The only two songs that weren't finished were 'Orion' and 'The Thing That Should Not Be.' " Hammett still has preproduction tapes that the band "recorded on a boom box in the middle of the room" at their rehearsal space in El Cerrito, California. "We were having so much fun together that the songs kinda wrote themselves."

THIS PAGE: MARK WEISS

If the recording process itself had been difficult, it wasn't evident during my visit. A playback of the as-yet unmixed title track sounded astonishingly good, which might be expected of most things cranked out at ear-splitting volume in a professional recording studio. But when they played the recordings of "Battery" and the recently completed "Orion," it became evident that there was more to Metallica than skateboards and skull rings. Suddenly, they sounded like a band that a major label might sign to a multimillion-dollar contract.

Later that night, as we settled in for our interview at a downtown Copenhagen restaurant, I hoped to learn more about the group's apparent change of fortune; Lars, however, made it clear that he had an agenda of his own. He seemed keen to play down the fact that Elektra had obviously put some real money into the band, claiming that favorable exchange rate had allowed the band to spend months working on the album. As for the foreign recording location, Copenhagen was chosen, he said, because Rasmussen liked it, though one suspected the Danish-born Ulrich did, too. It later transpired that the others had found the bitterly cold Danish winter, with its short, dark days, tough to bear. Burton had difficulty staying focused once his bass parts were laid down and briefly returned home to San Francisco.

Listening to Ulrich, it was obvious that the group wanted finally to be taken seriously. "We've always had a serious attitude toward what we do," he said at one point, "especially in the studio. On our days off we might have a couple of these"—he indicated the Elephant beer—"but working on an album, you need to keep a clear head." It was quite a change from the drunken goofball personas they had exhibited just a couple of years before.

And while sales were obviously important to them, their main hope was to earn the respect of fans and critics. Clearly, they were still trying to determine how to maintain their integrity while reaching for the brass ring—to keep to their roots while broadening their sound and, hopefully, appeal. Said Lars, "There has got to be a way to make it without sucking."

At this point, Burton leaned in. "This is the closest we've come yet to doing something really cool," he said. "You can really hear the progression from the last album."

That was true. Yet it was baffling how so many of their more towering numbers went from fast to slow, usually just as the riff kicked in. The song that would become "Master of Puppets" was such a track: in their heyday, Sabbath would have killed for such a riff. Then, just as the song starts to take off, everything slows down. It seemed counter intuitive, if not downright self-defeating. Ulrich pondered this point, then replied: "I don't know that I've ever thought about that. I guess that's just the way we kinda like it." Years later, producer Bob Rock raised the same point with Ulrich and Hetfield when he first listened to the demos for what became the Black Album.

"I used to think it was cool, a sign of our fuck-you attitude to being commercial," Ulrich says today. "Now I realize it was just basically because we couldn't play. It wasn't until we started with Bob Rock that we really learned how to nail a riff down like AC/DC or the Stones. It's actually a lot harder to do but you don't know that until you finally try it."

WITH OZZY OSBOURNE, FOR WHOM THEY OPENED ON THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, NEW YORK, 1986

ROSS HALFIN

As our Copenhagen dining experience wound down, questions remained: How would the thrash crowd respond to the new album? How did Metallica hope to reach a larger audience with the new album without releasing a single, a matter they had not yet discussed with the folks Elektra, or anyone else apparently. Their answers would have to wait. In time, they would be revealed.

Master of Puppets was duly released in the U.S. on March 3, 1986. Though Elektra clearly had high hopes for its commercial success, having granted the band both the money and time required to do the job right, it still wasn't clear how the payoff could be achieved. At the time of the record's release, Bon Jovi's *Slippery When Wet* was the most popular rock album, its suggestive title serving up an inadvertent reference to the slick production qualities embraced by Bon Jovi and every other mainstream act of the day. Even Judas Priest and Iron Maiden had begun using synthesizers and sequencing technology on their albums *Turbo* and *Somewhere in*

AT SWEET SILENCE STUDIOS IN COPENHAGEN, DURING SESSIONS FOR THE ALBUM, IN 1985

Time, respectively.

True, *Master of Puppets* benefited from an impressive post-production mix by veteran L.A. studio fixer Michael Wagener. Yet Metallica's refusal to release a single—let alone shoot a video—seemed as masochistic as their groove-killing tempo changes. Sure enough, despite generally positive reviews, the album sat low on the charts upon its release.

Musically, Metallica had achieved one of the goals they stated in Copenhagen: to stay true to their thrash roots while expanding their musical palette. "We wanted to make an album that left all that scene behind," Ulrich said years later, "something we took our time on and gave our best shot. Not something with a label." Yet, *Master of Puppets* had a lot in common with its predecessor, right down to the sequencing. Like *Ride the Lightning*, it began with a slow, atmospheric acoustic guitar intro before segueing into fast electric rock ("Battery," an oblique tribute to their old stomping ground, the Old Waldorf Club on San Francisco's Battery Street). This was followed by the epic title track and, four songs in, the token "ballad," "Welcome Home (Sanitarium)."

Peel back the album's outer skin, however, and it was clear there was more going on than just improving upon a successful template. The main difference was a huge leap forward in the quality of the songwriting. It's no coincidence that *Master of Puppets* was the first Metallica album to feature all-new material since the group's early days, when a pre-Megadeth Dave Mustaine, not Kirk Hammett, played alongside Hetfield. Gone were tunes about how hard they were gonna kick your ass. In their place were songs about more complicated subjects. According to Hetfield, the title track itself "deals pretty much with drugs, how things get switched around. Instead of you controlling what you're taking and doing, it's drugs controlling you." A closer reading of the song, though, coupled with the unequivocal imagery of the album sleeve—an apocalyptic field of white crosses manipulated by the strings of an unseen puppet master—seems to suggest a more metaphorical attack on the invisible forces of control that govern all our lives. As Hammett now says, the "concept" behind the whole album was one of "manipulation in all its various forms."

"The Thing That Should Not Be," which followed "Master of Puppets," was clearly inspired by the gothic horror tales of H.P. Lovecraft. Slow and evocative, it was the first of several songs on the album to escape the confines of thrash and shoot for something more original. Even so, the song's lyrical couplet "Not dead which eternal lie/Stranger eons death may lie" is a paraphrased quote from Lovecraft that had also graced the cover of Iron Maiden's live double album, *Live After Death*, which had been released while Metallica were in Copenhagen. It's hard to imagine that Lars, the quintessential Maiden fan in those days, hadn't been aware of it.

"Welcome Home (Sanitarium)," meanwhile, was another midpaced attempt to break free of thrash. Written from the viewpoint of an unjustly incarcerated patient at a mental hospital—and destined, like the title track, to become a major highlight of Metallica's live shows over the next 10 years—the song plays upon themes of loneliness and social separation, subjects that would resurface in a more successful format on "One," a track to appear on their next album, *...And Justice for All*. The next song, "Disposable Heroes," was a musically straightforward antiwar song that, as Ulrich said, "rocked like a bitch." Hammett recalls that the little guitar passage at the end of the verse was his attempt at a military march. "I watched a lot of war movies, trying to find something that was like a call to arms—like something the bagpipes would play as they were going into battle—[*and*] that's what I came up with."

Its followup, "Leper Messiah," is obviously about the hypocrisy of the TV evangelists that had become such an American phenomenon in the early Eighties. The title, taken from the lyric to David Bowie's 1972 track "Ziggy Stardust," also served as James and Lars' putdown of the Los Angeles production-line glam metal scene they had rejected in the band's earliest days, as exemplified by the line: "Join the endless chain/Taken by his glamour..." Interestingly, Dave Mustaine later claimed to have cowritten "Leper Messiah," though Hammett denies this. "There's maybe a chord progression that was in that song—like maybe 10 seconds that came from him—that, ironically, is just before the guitar solo. But he did not write 'Leper Messiah' at all. In fact, I remember being in the room when Lars came up with the main musical motif."

More intriguingly, one of the major highlights of the album contained no lyrics at all, its message relying totally on the eloquence of Burton's soaring, hypnotic bass. Clocking in at eight minutes, "Orion" illustrates, perhaps better than any other track on the album, how far Metallica had come since the days of *Kill 'Em All*. Hammett recalls how the haunting bass part in the middle

ALL IMAGES ROSS HALFIN

BURTON ONSTAGE AT THE PINE KNOB AMPHITHEATER, NEAR DETROIT, DURING THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, IN 1986

BEHIND THE AGORA BALLROOM, IN CHICAGO

FOR MANY FANS, THE LOSS OF CLIFF REPRESENTED THE LOSS OF THE BAND'S IDENTITY; EVEN, PERHAPS, ITS SOUL.

section (a gorgeous riff later sampled by DJ Shadow on his 1997 album, *Endtroducing...*) had "already been written by Cliff—with bass lines, two- and three-part harmonies, all completely arranged—while we were in El Cerrito. We were really blown away."

Ironically, "Damage, Inc.," the final track on the album that firmly bade farewell to Metallica's thrash origins, is the biggest thrash-out on the entire collection—an epic, in-your-face, bones-into-dust heavy metal behemoth. "I remember Cliff playing the intro to 'Damage, Inc.' on the *Ride the Lightning* tour," says Hammett. "It had all these bass swells and harmonies on it. Hammett recalls Burton telling him the piece is based on the J.S. Bach chorale prelude "Come Sweet Death."

Hetfield, meanwhile, used the finale to spell out the band's credo in the lines: 'Following our instinct not a trend/Go against the grain until the end.' More than anything else, *Master of Puppets* was the indisputable proof of that. Burton called it "the best thing we've ever done, period. You read bands saying that shit in magazines and it looks so fake, but that's how I feel about *Master*... We never got that far with something before."

He was right. Now firmly recognized as one of their two finest works—along with the Black Album—*Master of Puppets* is still the album you pull out to prove that this monumental, zillion-dollar, corporate monster we now know as Metallica actually does have a soul.

The refinements demonstrated on *Master of Puppets* showed Metallica as a group that had escaped the thrash ghetto and was now ready for anything. This was no longer "Metal Up Your Ass," as they had wanted to call their first album, but rock with its head out on the creative ledge—a phenomenon, with very few exceptions, not seen in the U.S. charts since the heyday of the Seventies.

"The cohesiveness from one track to the next made perfect sense to us," says Hammett. "It was almost as if the album created itself. From the beginning, when we started writing the songs, all the way to the end, really great ideas were just moving and coming out of nowhere in a nonstop flow. It was almost magical, because it seemed like everything we played went right, every note we played was in exactly the right spot, and it couldn't ever have gone any better. It was just a very, very special time."

Holding the album in his hands for the first time, Hammett says, he knew Metallica had created something unique and lasting. "I remember thinking, Wow, this is a fucking great album! Even if it doesn't sell anything, it doesn't matter to me because this is such a great musical statement that we've just created."

Having convinced everyone against releasing a single—"the songs were too long and they wouldn't get radio play anyway," says Hammett—Metallica hit the road to support *Master of Puppets* the only way they knew how. "We decided to just go on the road and tour until we dropped," says Hammett. "Which is literally what we did."

Despite the album's low chart performance, Metallica were signed up to open Ozzy Osbourne's U.S. tour, which began on March 27, 1986, at the Kansas Coliseum in Wichita. Black Sabbath fans to a man, Metallica were thrilled by the opportunity to tour with Osbourne. Ozzy, for his part, soon became convinced the group was mocking him. "All I used to hear coming out of their trailer backstage was old fucking Sabbath albums!" he recalls. But as Ulrich says, "You gotta remember, we're old Black Sabbath fans. Without Sabbath there would have been no Metallica. We were definitely in awe when we started out on that tour. Ozzy was a fucking legend to us. But by the end of it we'd had some good times with him."

Of the band's nine-song setlist, four were from the new album: "Battery," which opened the set; "Master of Puppets"; 'Welcome Home (Sanitarium)"; and "Damage, Inc.," which closed the set. Between dates with Osbourne, Metallica played headlining shows at small venues. Thanks to their drive, *Master of Puppets* began to climb the charts, hitting Number 29 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 despite a complete lack of TV or radio exposure. The album reached Number 41 in the U.K. charts and did well in other countries as well. For the first time, Metallica had shown up on the international radar. Suddenly, whether you'd heard the album or not, you were obliged to have an opinion on it.

Or on the group itself. A *Newsweek* reporter

WITH JASON NEWSTED, MAY 1987

on the tour described Metallica as "ugly," "smelly" and "obnoxious." He added: "I hate them. But you can't deny their success." In fact, the Ozzy/Metallica U.S. tour was the second-biggest ticket-selling draw on the American circuit that summer (only the Aerosmith/Ted Nugent tour outgrossed them). Sales of Metallica T-shirts also rocketed: a sure sign of success. By the time the U.S. tour ended at the Coliseum in Hampton, Virginia, on August 3, *Master of Puppets* had sold more than 500,000 copies in the U.S. alone, giving the band its first Gold record.

Master of Puppets brought Metallica to the mainstream, and the mainstream would never be the same. By comparison, bands like Iron Maiden and Judas Priest, previously the epitome of hardcore metal, now sounded positively middle-of-the-road. The sense of frustration and anger that permeates *Master of Puppets* resonated with a new generation of fans who didn't want their rock rouged or radio-friendly but hard-edged and uncompromising.

Hammett says he was stunned when *Master of Puppets* went Gold. "Until then, I had thought, maybe people just don't understand us. Maybe we're doing something that's going over people's heads. But as we went on that Ozzy tour, we converted a lot of people night after night. And it gave us a lot of hope just to carry on. Suddenly we were selling albums, and a lot of it had to do with just going out there and playing our asses off, putting on a great show, just bringing the music to the people in that way, because radio just wasn't having us."

He recalls having a meeting on the back of the tour bus with the band's manager, Cliff Bernstein. "He said, 'You guys will be able to put down-payments on houses. I'm just really proud of you.' And the first thing that Cliff said was, 'I want a house where I can shoot my gun that shoots knives!' That was such a typical Cliff Burton thing to say."

Perhaps no one embodied the true spirit of Metallica better than Cliff Burton. Although the songwriting chores had always been mainly

> "WE DIDN'T SET OUT TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT WOULD STAND THE TEST OF TIME 20 YEARS FROM NOW. THAT WASN'T ON OUR RADAR AT ALL."
> —HAMMETT

the preserve of Hetfield and Ulrich, Burton was arguably the group's spiritual figurehead. Hetfield's image had yet to fully develop, while Ulrich's position as the group's de facto spokesman was reserved strictly for offstage pronouncements. Burton, on the other hand, had always cast the longest shadow in Metallica, both onstage and off. Cruelly, *Master of Puppets*—the record that, as Burton said, had been such an achievement for the group—would be his swan song, and its tour his final journey.

In early August, Metallica completed its U.S. tour with Osbourne and enjoyed a five-week break. On September 10, the European leg of the tour got underway in the U.K. Following a celebratory appearance at London's prestigious Hammersmith Odeon theatre on September 21, Metallica headed for Sweden and, three days later, commenced touring in Lund. On September 26, Metallica appeared at the Solnahallen in Stockholm. The show ended with Burton pummelling out the riffs to "Damage, Inc." and "Blitzkrieg," his right arm windmilling wildly. It had been a good night. Hetfield had been able to play guitar again for the first time since he'd broken his wrist, and Burton had pulled off a show-stopping bass solo during an improvised and hugely emotional rendering of the "Star Spangled Banner." The mood was high on the tour bus later that night as they hurtled down the motorway to Copenhagen, the very city where the album had been born.

Earlier that night, the band had drawn cards to decide who got which bunk. Burton drew the ace of spades and got the bunk normally used by Hammett. At just past five o'clock that morning, the driver lost control of the bus, which skidded horrifyingly before rolling over into a roadside ditch. Burton was thrown through the glass window nearest his bunk, where he was sleeping, and crushed as the bus collapsed on top of him. A crane was brought to the scene to raise the vehicle, but it was already too late. Cliff Burton was just 24.

Ulrich broke a toe, Hammett and Hetfield were badly bruised, and then-tour manager Bobby Schneider dislocated his shoulder. Burton was the sole fatality. The bus driver was subsequently arrested by Danish police and charged with manslaughter. (He would escape imprisonment and was even rumored to be driving bands around Europe again some years later.)

Anthrax, who had been the opening act on the tour, had received the news when they arrived in Copenhagen. The next day, Anthrax guitarist Scott Ian summed up the feelings of many: "From the first day that I met him to the last one we spent together in Stockholm, Cliff Burton never changed. Even with Metallica's growing success, he remained the same really nice guy I first got to know and like. His mode of dress and his manner never altered, and we're all gonna miss him terribly."

Burton's funeral was held 10 days later in his northern California hometown of Castro Valley. His bandmates were still in shock. "Orion" was played at the tearful service, which the band attended along with his friends and devastated family. Cliff's ashes were later spread over Maxwell Ranch, one of his favorite places.

There was some talk, initially, that Burton's death would also mean the end of Metallica. Instead, as we now know, the band's post-Burton career was the most unexpected success story. As Kirk said at the time, "It wouldn't be fair to Cliff to just stop. He would've wanted us to go on." That said, it is doubtful Metallica would have become as successful as they did had Burton not died. For one thing, it's impossible to imagine Cliff Burton agreeing to work with Bon Jovi producer Bob Rock, as they did four years later on the Black Album, the record that made them superstars.

For another, it's entirely plausible that Burton's death spurred Metallica to work harder and reach higher, to hold onto success even as events conspired to take it from them. Six weeks after his death, Metallica played their first show with Burton's replacement, former Flotsam and Jetsam bassist Jason Newsted, at the Country Club in Reseda, California. The world tour for *Master of Puppets* resumed, followed by the release of multi-Platinum albums like *...And Justice for All* in 1988 and, even more successfully, the Black Album in 1991. By then, it was hard to remember that Metallica had once been a weedy band of thrash-loving headbangers.

Yet for many fans, Burton's death represented the loss of the band's identity, even, perhaps, its soul. Indeed, 20 years on, he still casts such a shadow over the story of Metallica and, specifically, *Master of Puppets*. It has become, above all, Cliff's album, imbued with his uniquely individual personality, unshakable character,

MARK WEISS

sheer courage, wry humour and deeply held musical beliefs.

"When Cliff left us, it was a huge loss," says Hammett, "in terms of losing a friend but also in terms of losing a very, very strong musical ally. I mean, he was a large influence on us not just as a bass player but also as a musician. He taught me about counterpoint. Cliff was the master of that—it came from his classical influence. He also had a really good melodic feel."

Hammett says that, for a bass player, Burton played a lot of guitar. "In fact, he would drive me crazy with it. We'd come back to the hotel after a night of gallivanting, like totally wasted at three in the morning. But instead of crashing out he would immediately want to set up the electric guitars and start playing for a couple of hours. I'd be exhausted, but then I'd totally get sucked into it and start playing along with him. He would talk me into figuring out the guitar parts of certain songs. He was obsessed with Ed King, one of the guitar players in Lynyrd Skynyrd. He said that Ed King was his favorite guitar player."

Hammett maintains that, had Metallica made another album with Burton, it would have been "extremely melodic." "Right before he died, he was listening to Creedence Clearwater Revival, the Eagles, the Velvet Underground, Kate Bush... He listened to a *lot* of Bach, and he turned us onto R.E.M. At the same time he was also listening to a lot of Mercyful Fate, a lot of Motörhead, a lot of Zeppelin and Hendrix and Pink Floyd. Plus, he was really into Anthrax. So he really could have gone anywhere with his music."

Despite Burton's free-ranging musical tastes, Black Sabbath remained his favorite band and Geezer Butler his favorite bassist. "Geezer Butler's right-hand technique involved just hitting the strings with your fingers. Cliff called it 'floppy-finger technique' and said he had it to." As Hammett explains, a severed tendon prevented Burton from bending his right-hand pinkie. "It had no dexterity whatsoever, so he would just use it to hammer the strings and do anything to get a sound out of his bass."

Of course, Burton's influence extended beyond the stage. Says Hammett, "He was the most mature out of all of us. He had a quiet strength, was very, very confident, and the rest of us would defer to him in times of trouble. He just seemed so much wiser and much more responsible than the rest of us. He was the guy who would reprimand us and say, 'What the hell were you thinking?' or 'That was a really stupid thing to do!' "

Burton, Hammett says, had "a lot of integrity," something he expressed in a stock sentence Hammett uses to this day: "It was, 'I don't give a fuck!' He was just very, very real. I don't know if he knew somehow that his time was limited but he really lived it like it was his last day, because he just wouldn't settle for anything other than what he believed in. And that taught me a lot. To this day there are things, situations that I'm going through and I can just picture Cliff saying, 'What's real to you? What's real to us in this situation? What really matters?' And he would go through a bunch of points that didn't really matter, naming them off, and at the end of each one he'd say: 'I don't give a fuck!' He was just a very, very strong guy, stubborn at times, and because of that he and I would clash sometimes. But we really were just bros. He was just a big influence on us all."

As such, *Master of Puppets* was both a beginning and an ending. You may argue about what those two things are, but one thing is for certain: Metallica would never record another album like it.

"That's probably why it's still my favorite Metallica album," says Hammett. "It was just an amazing time for us. We were putting all the right notes in all the right places." There was no attempt to make an album that would stand the test of time, he says. "That wasn't on our radar at all. We just wanted to make the best possible album we could at the time. We really just set our sights to that and buckled down. And we always felt that if we did indeed give it all we had and it didn't pan out the way we wanted to, at least we could say we tried our best. And that was our attitude."

He says that he played the album a day or so beforehand in preparation for our interview. Afterward, he was struck by a thought: "If you released this today, it would be right up there with all the newest releases in terms of sound, quality, production, concept... It's still relevant. Even the things James was writing about back then are still relevant. And you get the feeling it will all still be relevant tomorrow." GT

THE LAST KNOWN GROUP SHOT WITH CLIFF BURTON, TAKEN DURING REHEARSALS FOR THE 1986 TOUR

ROSS HALFIN

CLIFF BURTON BACKSTAGE
AT MONSTERS OF ROCK,
DONINGTON PARK, ENGLAND,
AUGUST 1985

ROSS HALFIN

Fade to Black

Cliff Burton's last 24 hours

BY JORGEN HOLMSTEDT

IMAGINE MEETING AN ARTIST, talking at length with him, seeing him perform at a concert that evening and then reading the next day that he is dead. That's exactly what happened to this writer one early autumn day in 1986. The situation seemed unreal and was made all the more confusing by a tiny, unfathomable headline in the Swedish daily *Expressen*: "Fatal accident involving pop group the Metallicers." The name of the bassist killed in the crash was conspicuously absent.

After a telephone call, the confirmation: Cliff Burton of Metallica was dead at just 24, crushed under a bus on the old E4 road somewhere in the thick forests of Smaland, in southern Sweden. The date was September 27, 1986. Dumbfounded, I folded the newspaper. I hadn't even had time to take the Dictaphone from my bag after the previous day's work. The cassette containing Cliff's last interview was still in it. As I began to think back over his last day in Sweden, my thoughts flitted back to the first time I met him, December 20, 1985, in Copenhagen, Denmark, where I was reporting on King Diamond's debut gig at the Saga Theatre. After the show, Howard Johnson of *Kerrang!* introduced me to a bearded Lars Ulrich, Metallica's Danish-born drummer, who stood arrogantly spitting on the floor. At that time, Metallica were in the process of completing their third album in Copenhagen's Sweet Silence Studio. I was keen to get an interview, but the band's big new management company, Q-Prime, had ordered a press ban. There was to be no media contact until the album was finished, which wasn't until January 10, 1986.

However, my friend Metal Mike, chief editor of *Aardschok*, the Dutch metal magazine that I occasionally wrote for, knew Burton and Ulrich, and he arranged for them to sit for an informal interview with me. Our talk took place in a cheap hotel room. Burton didn't say much and sat with his head bowed, staring at his knees. The talkative Ulrich was in full flow, though, and even interrupted Burton the few times he tried to say anything. When I asked how the new record sounded, Burton's answer was brief: "Heavier" was all he said.

Later that evening, nearly everyone went to the rock club

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On the Rox, the hottest nightspot in town, but Burton didn't come along, quite typical of the very introverted bassist.

Over the next nine months, things began to take off for Metallica. They supported Ozzy Osbourne on a U.S. tour, which helped raise their profile. In the rest of the world, they began touring as headliners and playing in larger and larger halls. Their 1986 album, *Master of Puppets*, shot into the *Billboard* top 30 and sold 470,000 copies in the U.S., placing it close to Gold album status.

After that, there was no stopping them. Metallica became the first thrash metal band to sign with a major American label, Elektra, and they also inked a nearly worldwide deal with the equally large Polygram (now Universal). The band sold 15 million copies of their eponymous "Black Album" several years later, and these days they're recognized as part of the mainstream.

But on September 26, 1986, they were merely four longhaired and scruffy young upstarts performing in an old cinema in Solna, Sweden. It would be Cliff Burton's last show. The previous evening they had played at the Skedsmo Hall in Oslo, Norway, then traveled through the night on their tour bus. Arriving in Solna, Metallica were given little attention by the Swedish media. "We had a big-selling album, but no one would touch Metallica," recalls Tomas Sunmo, A&R man at Alpha Records, where the band's European record company Music for Nations was based. "They all thought the band's music was repulsive. You could see column inch after column inch about artists who only had a fraction of Metallica's sales. It was hugely frustrating."

Nonetheless, *Master of Puppets* had sold a relatively fantastic 45,000 copies in Sweden by September 1986 and was soon to go Gold by Swedish standards. To celebrate, Alpha threw a party for the group on the day of the Solna show. The band, a bunch of very young fanzine reporters and I took our places.

I ended up seated next to Cliff Burton. No one else was interested in talking to the normally taciturn bassist when other band members were available. The fact is, I couldn't recall more than a handful of interviews that Cliff had done up to that point. I had been promised an interview with Ulrich later, so while waiting for him I interviewed Burton, who sipped a beer while building a small mountain of beer cans. He wore a T-shirt with an unbuttoned shirt over it, a battered denim jacket, and those legendary flared bell-bottom jeans that Burton alone wore in 1986, when horribly tight jeans were the height of fashion. He was usually as quiet offstage as he was wild onstage, but on this occasion Burton wasn't the least bit reserved or tongue-tied. I started by asking him if things had turned out as he'd expected.

CLIFF BURTON [*cracking open yet another can of lukewarm lager*] Hell no! You actually expect nothing in this business. We haven't become stars overnight. The whole time we've just done what felt right. We've never striven for rock-star status or anything like that.

GUITAR LEGENDS Not even when you signed to Elektra?

BURTON No. For us it was merely an opportunity to buy more equipment and to be able to spend more time in the studio—you know, to build up the whole thing further.

GL Does it feel like a lot of the mass media look down on thrash metal bands like Metallica?

BURTON We can't be bothered to worry about the mass media, what they say or write. We have to take that position, otherwise we'd become influenced by them, and that's never going to happen to us. The record sales speak for themselves. We just do what we do.

GL Can you describe the feeling of seeing your album climb higher and higher up the charts, even higher than many established names?

BURTON The only word I can think of is "surprise." It's not something you expect, especially as we never get played on the radio. It makes you feel like there's hope for our type of music. It shows that you actually don't need radio.

GL You said that you'd release a 12-inch single from *Master of Puppets*, along with two previously unreleased tracks on the B-side. What happened to that?

BURTON We were going to do that, but then James injured his wrist and we couldn't record songs for the B-side.

GL So there are no songs left over from the *Master of Puppets* sessions that you could use instead?

BURTON No, we tried to do a couple of extra songs but they didn't turn out like we wanted, so we ditched them.

GL Now that you're at the top, or at least near it, is everything as you'd hoped it would be?

BURTON We have more to do, you can be sure of that. But you don't think about what you expect. You just play like hell and look back when it's over. Otherwise you'd just get confused.

GL You must be earning more money nowadays, at least?

BURTON We should be, yes! [*laughs*] We've got a little more money to work with, and then we're waiting for more from the sales of the latest album. We've survived. Touring has become more pleasant now that we have a better bus and stuff.

GL One of your friends told me that 1986 is actually the first year you've earned some money.

BURTON True. All the money we've received

BACKSTAGE AFTER A PERFORMANCE ON THE *PUPPETS* TOUR, MAY 1986.

MARK WEISS

until now, we've plowed back into the band to buy equipment.

GL What do you think of *Kill 'Em All* now?

BURTON I haven't heard it in a year and a half! [*laughs*] We still play songs from it, but a little differently from how we played them on the album. They've become faster and heavier, I think.

GL Why have the band kept coming back to Sweet Silence Studio in Copenhagen?

BURTON First, it's a great studio and there's a talented engineer there, Flemming Rasmussen. Also, we're getting it at a good price. We know that we can get a good sound there. All that means we feel at home in Sweet Silence. There's only a single studio room there, so you avoid the hassle of having lots of other bands running around all the time. You can concentrate on your job.

GL There's quite a Seventies-style sound on *Master of Puppets*, with a very dry tone and lots of echo on the drums, a bit like Ozzy and Dio have on their records. Do you agree?

BURTON Yeah, we wanted to have it really dry because it makes it sound extra tight. Michael Wagner mixed the record and every time we went in to listen he had masses of reverb on the guitars. The snare was like *ssschplaasshhhh!* A totally messy sound. It didn't work on the fast songs; they just became all squishy. We didn't want some overproduced album so we told him to keep it dry and tight, as close to our live sound as possible.

GL Right now several so-called thrash metal bands, such as Anthrax and Metal Church, are getting contracts with major labels. It seems like all that began with Metallica. Do you feel like trendsetters?

BURTON No, it doesn't feel like that. It'd be weird to go about thinking of yourself in those terms. The record company possibly thinks of us as trendsetters, but we certainly don't. And it'll be interesting to see how long all those bands stay with the major labels.

GL You don't think this type of music is going to develop further?

BURTON There'll be changes. You know, something new will take you by surprise. But there will always be those who survive.

GL Have you had time to write any new songs since you recorded *Master of Puppets*?

BURTON No. We're out on a yearlong tour. We have a few riffs here and there, concepts, maybe a couple of titles, but nothing finished yet.

GL Do you jam together before you go onstage?

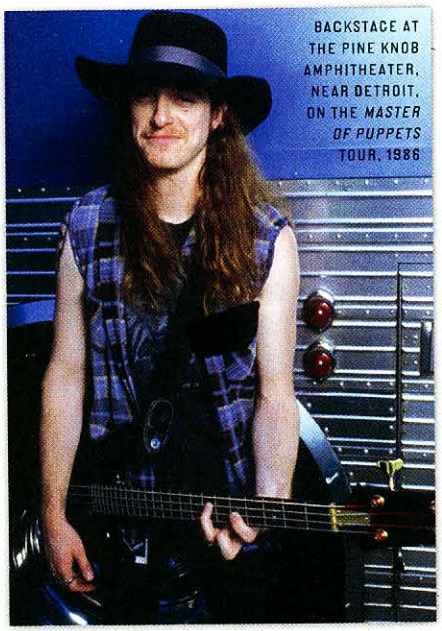
BURTON Yeah, we like to slaughter our songs like that! [*laughs*]. Sometimes we come up with new song ideas when we jam, but as often as not, nothing comes of it when we get in silly moods and start playing four different songs simultaneously. We each record ideas in our own rooms, and then play them for the rest of the band. When we're not out on tour we can arrange them into complete songs.

GL When does this tour end?

BURTON The European tour? Oh, I forget... [*For their last gig of the European tour, Metallica were scheduled to perform on October 26 at the Aardschok Festival in Holland, one of the biggest metal festivals at that time. Slayer and Anthrax were also on the bill.*] We ought to be done sometime in January 1987, in any case. Or in February, if they add shows. Maybe March. What do I know! [*laughs*] That's the way it goes. They always say, "You'll be touring there and there, and then you'll be done." Then it's the same old story: "By the way, we've extended the tour by five weeks, because you've started selling records in these countries as well."

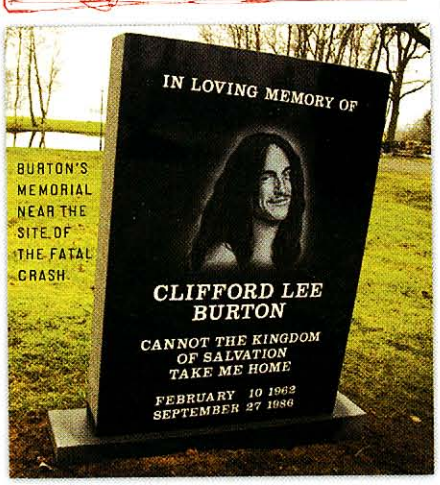
GL But you've nothing against that, have you?

BURTON No, not at all. That's how a band like ours gets bigger. Because we don't get any radio play, we have to play out as much as possible. This European tour goes on for about another month. Then we'll play two weeks in America, and after that we travel to Japan for about 10 days. Things have started to go really damn well in Japan now that we've finally gotten a major contract over there with CBS/Sony. *Master of Puppets* has done much better than the other two albums in Japan, so I can't wait for us to go there. After that, we don't really know what's happening. We might go to Australia, we might go to South America, but the plans are only sketchy. Then we're going to take some time off at home before we play the West Coast in January. We missed a lot of that part of the U.S.A. when we were with Ozzy, because he developed a throat problem and had to stop touring.



BACKSTAGE AT THE PINE KNOB AMPHITHEATER, NEAR DETROIT, ON THE *MASTER OF PUPPETS* TOUR, 1986

"I'M NEVER HOME— ALWAYS ON THE ROAD SOMEWHERE."



ROSS HALFIN

GL What do you know about Sweden?

BURTON Not much, I'm afraid.

GL Yngwie Malmsteen and Absolut vodka?

BURTON That's about it.

GL Do you still live in San Francisco?

BURTON Yes, I do. I live in my parents' apartment. I'm never home, though—always on the road somewhere. There's no point paying rent on a place that's only going to stand empty.

GL So you're not planning to buy a place you can call your own home?

BURTON I'll do that as soon as I can. But I don't have the money. It's a dream for me to be able to buy my own home. One day, hopefully, I'll have enough money.

GL Do you think you'll stay in San Francisco?

BURTON Yeah, in the Bay Area. It's my favorite place. Everyone in the band, apart from Lars, is aiming to stay in the Bay Area.

GL [*Metallica are*] called a thrash band, but I understand you don't listen to much thrash?

BURTON A little, but not much. There's a big difference between what we listen to compared with what we play ourselves. Personally, I listen to a lot of stuff that isn't heavy, like R.E.M. Have you heard them? It's a mellow southern kinda band. Then I like Peter Gabriel, Roxy Music and older music like Thin Lizzy, Blue Öyster Cult, Rush and Black Sabbath. The old shit. And punk stuff like the Misfits.

GL When you listen to mellow music, do you feel like you should be able to write that sort of song yourself?

BURTON Er, yeah, sometimes. But you know, there's no time for that. What we're doing now takes up all of our time and energy. Maybe one day, when we have more time, then I think it'll be possible. It's an interesting idea, for sure.

GL How do you think the next record will be?

BURTON It's impossible to predict. That's the future, and we're not worrying about it right now. We're concentrating on what we have to do now. When it's time for that, we'll see what happens. We haven't discussed the producer or anything like that yet. We thought about whether we should use a big-name producer on *Master of Puppets*, but when we got down to it, it didn't feel right. We know that Flemming Rasmussen will get the sounds we want. But I'm sure the day will come when we'll get someone else in. Especially as *Master of Puppets* took so long to make. If we pull a producer in, it'll be more a case of us wanting to have someone who will make us work somewhat faster.

GL I guess you won't be recording the next album in Copenhagen, seeing as you're bored of the town?

BURTON [*laughs*] As far as that's concerned, if we have our way, we'll be recording it in California. Presumably in Los Angeles. The tempo is automatically turned up there. There's no energy in Copenhagen. It's nothing you can hear in the music, but we lived there for five months in the middle of the worst winter. Next time it'd be cool to be able to do it somewhere where there's light and plenty of sun. GL

BLACK REIGN

JUST WEEKS FROM COMPLETING METALLICA'S BREAKTHROUGH HIT, THE "BLACK ALBUM," JAMES HETFIELD AND KIRK HAMMETT INVITED *GUITAR WORLD* INTO THE STUDIO FOR A REVEALING TALK ABOUT THEIR METAL MASTERPIECE.

BY JEFF GILBERT

AN OUTTAKE FROM THE BLACK ALBUM PROMOTIONAL PHOTO SHOOT.

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ROSS HALFIN

AS JAMES HETFIELD NOTES in the following interview, the United States launched and completed the first Gulf War in less time than it took Metallica to finish their 1991 multi-Platinum breakthrough release. Titled simply *Metallica*, but more commonly known as the "Black Album," the record brought Metallica into the mainstream and launched a new era for metal. In the months before its completion, *Guitar World* paid a studio visit to guitarists James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett as they put the finishing touches on the album. While our heroes were tired after months of hard work, they were clearly pleased with the results of their efforts.

"We've been in the studio so long, a war has come and gone, and we're still stuck in here!" A heavy weariness, quite evident behind James Hetfield's steely gaze, underscores the intense pressure that has been Metallica's constant companion over the past few months as they've labored to record *Metallica*, their first album in more than three years, and fifth overall. "It's pretty amazing when you think about it," Hetfield offers with a strained smile.

Here within the comfortable confines of One on One Studios in North Hollywood, it's down to the 11th hour for the world's greatest metal band. Working exhaustively around the clock with producer Bob Rock, Hetfield and Kirk Hammett take turns spit-polishing a guitar solo here and roughing out a vocal there. While this modern recording facility is outfitted with pool tables, weights, a well-stocked kitchen, dartboards, big-screen TVs, exercise machines and just about any creature-comfort a healthy (or otherwise) rock group could ever want, it has been a veritable Devil's Island for Metallica.

"We've seen four other bands come through and do their albums," Hetfield notes. "And some of those guys have already gone on tour!"

Outside, a small group of roving Metallica fans, hoping to catch a glimpse of James or Kirk entering (but never, it seems, leaving) the white, windowless stucco building, maintains a tireless vigil, shuffling up and

down the 5200 block of Lankershim Boulevard. Their nervous, darting eyes and untucked Metallica shirts have some local business proprietors double-checking their wares and wallets.

"This has been going on since last October, once them kids found out this heavy metal band was next door," says a leathery-looking taco vendor a block away. "They don't scare me none, though." As if on cue, a few scruffy fans wander in and order some burritos.

Inside the studio, Bob Rock is screaming. His voice penetrates the bank-vault thickness of the studio doors, almost reaching the street outside. The producer is at the hair-pulling stage after spending the past five-and-a-half hours trying to correct a single, renegade guitar note that, to his million-dollar ears, is a microscopic tone out of whack. "He's not having a good day," Hammett suggests with a sheepish grin. The guitarist is repeatedly called in to try to punch in a note that will allow the visibly stressed Canadian producer to finally wrap up the tedious session. Kirk excuses himself, runs into the studio's main room, shoulders a black ESP and effortlessly runs through the solo for the 20th time. "I think I got it," he says.

It's no small wonder that Bob Rock—the career-rescuing hit-maker for artists like Mötley Crüe, Aerosmith, the Cult and Bon Jovi—is concerned with something as seemingly trivial as a single guitar note. Taking on the Metallica project was a critical step in his otherwise Top 40–oriented career. "People will be saying Bob made Metallica sound like Bon Jovi," James remarks. "They don't realize that no one screws with us, except us. Bob fit right into the program and the direction we were going."

Certainly, Rock's commercially successful background has raised more than a few eyebrows among Metallica's many supporters. The notion of Hetfield and company opting for the producer's trademark approach—crisp, clear guitars and radio-friendly hooks—is enough to severely traumatize fans who drink in sledgehammer chords like they're mother's milk.

"We're not really out to justify what we're doing," Hetfield says defensively. "We don't give a shit. This is what we want and this is how it is. Bob just helped us get what we want."

What they wanted for Metallica, and what they got, were guitars that ring more sharply than ever, leaving a clean trail of resonating destruction. Where *...And Justice for All* was weak and flat-sounding in the bass and drum mix, the new album bursts with a deep snare crack and a bass thick and heavy enough to set cement with. The band's whiplash tempo changes and complicated arrangements have been revamped into a lethal and immensely heavy, groove-laden sound and album that should give thrash a sharp kick in its sluggish ass.

"Kirk!" Rock's screams are getting louder.

"Uh-oh," Hammett says, jumping up like a dog about to be punished for knocking over the garbage can. "Got to go."

ULRICH AND HETFIELD DURING THE SESSIONS FOR THE BLACK ALBUM.

GUITAR LEGENDS Your patented "Metallicrunch" seems bigger and badder than ever on the new album. What did you do to fatten your sound?

KIRK HAMMETT First, I went through my CD collection and picked out guitar sounds that impressed me and gave them to Bob Rock as points of reference. It helps to know what kind of tone you're trying to pursue.

GL What discs did you give him?

HAMMETT I was particularly impressed with Gary Moore's sound on his latest album, *Still Got the Blues*. I used one of the breaks from "Oh, Pretty Woman" as a main reference. I also gave him UFO's *Obsession*—I've always liked Michael Schenker's sound. The third example was something by Carlos Santana. I was shooting for a real upfront-sounding guitar.

GL But wasn't that the problem with *...And Justice For All*? The guitar was so upfront that it obscured Jason's [*Newsted*] bass.

JAMES HETFIELD The bass was obscured for two reasons. First, on [*the* Garage Days Re-Revisited *EP*], Jason tended to double my rhythm guitar parts, so it was hard to tell where my guitar started and his bass left off. Also, my tone on *Justice* was very scooped—all lows and highs with very little midrange. When my rhythm parts were placed in the mix, my guitar sound ate up all the lower frequencies. Jason and I were always battling for the same space in the mix.

On this album, Jason approached his parts differently. He's playing more with Lars' kick drum, so his bass lines are very distinct from my guitar lines; we're not getting in each other's way. Bob really helped us with orchestrating and bringing out the low end—getting the guitar and bass to work together. In fact, when I played the album for a friend, he asked, "What is that weird low-end sound?" I said, "That's something new for us. It's called bass!"

GL Did Bob understand the Metallica guitar sound?

HETFIELD Oh yeah, and he actually added to it. After we recorded some of the new album, we pulled out the actual master tapes from *Justice* and singled out the guitar sound. I discovered something that I already knew—that my *Justice* sound lacked body. As I mentioned earlier, midrange has always been a no-no for me, but Bob

ALL IMAGES ROSS HALFIN

showed me that having a touch of it in there really adds to your tone.

I think he was a little intimidated at the start because he wasn't sure how far he could push us. Bob was trying to be real professional, so we had to loosen him up. He was really polite at first and would say things like, "It's your album, do whatever you want," and "It's only my opinion, but how about if we try this?" [*laughs*] However, seven months in the studio with Metallica tends to change a man. And Bob's been changed. [*laughs*] He's got a few more gray hairs, a few more wrinkles. He grew a tumor and has some sore knuckles from hitting the studio walls.

HAMMETT Yeah, he really loosened up. In no time he was screaming and yelling and saying stuff like, "You have to get angry for this part. Play it really mean and dirty!" Then we'd record another part and he'd say, "Be bluesy and bendy." And to illustrate his point, Bob would move his shoulders all around. I'd just stare at him like he was a madman, thinking, Uh, well, okay. But his approach eventually worked. I really started focusing on what he was trying to say. He encouraged me to think conceptually, not with my fingers. I thought a lot about what I felt would be the best way to approach the solo from a mental standpoint. As a result, my solos turned out smoother and more confidently executed.

GL Were you ever afraid that Bob was going to turn Metallica into a pop band?

HETFIELD Some people thought Bob would make us sound too commercial. You know: "Oh, Bob works with Bon Jovi, Bob works with Mötley Crüe." But if [*former Metallica producer*] Flemming Rasmussen worked on a Bon Jovi record, would Bon Jovi all of a sudden sound like Metallica? We chose Bob because we were really impressed with his crisp, full-sounding production on the Cult's *Electric* album and on Mötley Crüe's *Dr. Feelgood*.

HAMMETT We wanted to create a different record and offer something new to our audience. I hate it when bands stop taking chances. A lot of bands put out the same record three or four times, and we didn't want to fall into that rut.

The truth is, we may have been guilty in the past of putting out the same running order—you know, start out with a fast song, then the title track, then a ballad. Other than that, though, we've really tried to create something different every time we went into the studio. And on *Metallica*, we made a conscious effort to alter and expand the band's basic elements.

GL Did you experiment with different amps and cabinets?

HETFIELD We tried a bunch of amps, but I ended up using the same Mesa/Boogie Simul-class Mark II that I've used on the last three albums. In Los Angeles there are a million amps you can try out, but none of them were up to snuff. Bob also brought in a bunch of crappy-looking vintage amps. We gave everything a shot and ended up with the same old shit. [*laughs*]

I must admit, though, it was a lot of fun trying out all those little Sixties and Seventies amps—they really sounded unique. A lot of metal players have forgotten that they can be useful. We used a couple of vintage amps for texture. But I wasn't about to play a rhythm part through a fucking Fender Supro amp, you know? We sure as hell weren't making *Led Zeppelin*.

GL Kirk, what did you use for amplification?

HAMMETT I used a Bradshaw preamp for the lows and mids, and a couple of Marshalls for the nice clean highs. We EQ'd it through the board a little bit, and it worked out great.

The miking process was pretty simple. Bob had an engineer move a mic around in front of the cabinet until I heard the sound I wanted.

GL Is your studio setup the same as your live setup?

HETFIELD My live sound doesn't work in the studio; it's a completely different animal. Every little thing is detrimental to the sound. And if someone moves a mic after we've got the sound we want, then it's lost. It's pretty much a case of "lock the door and set up a police line."

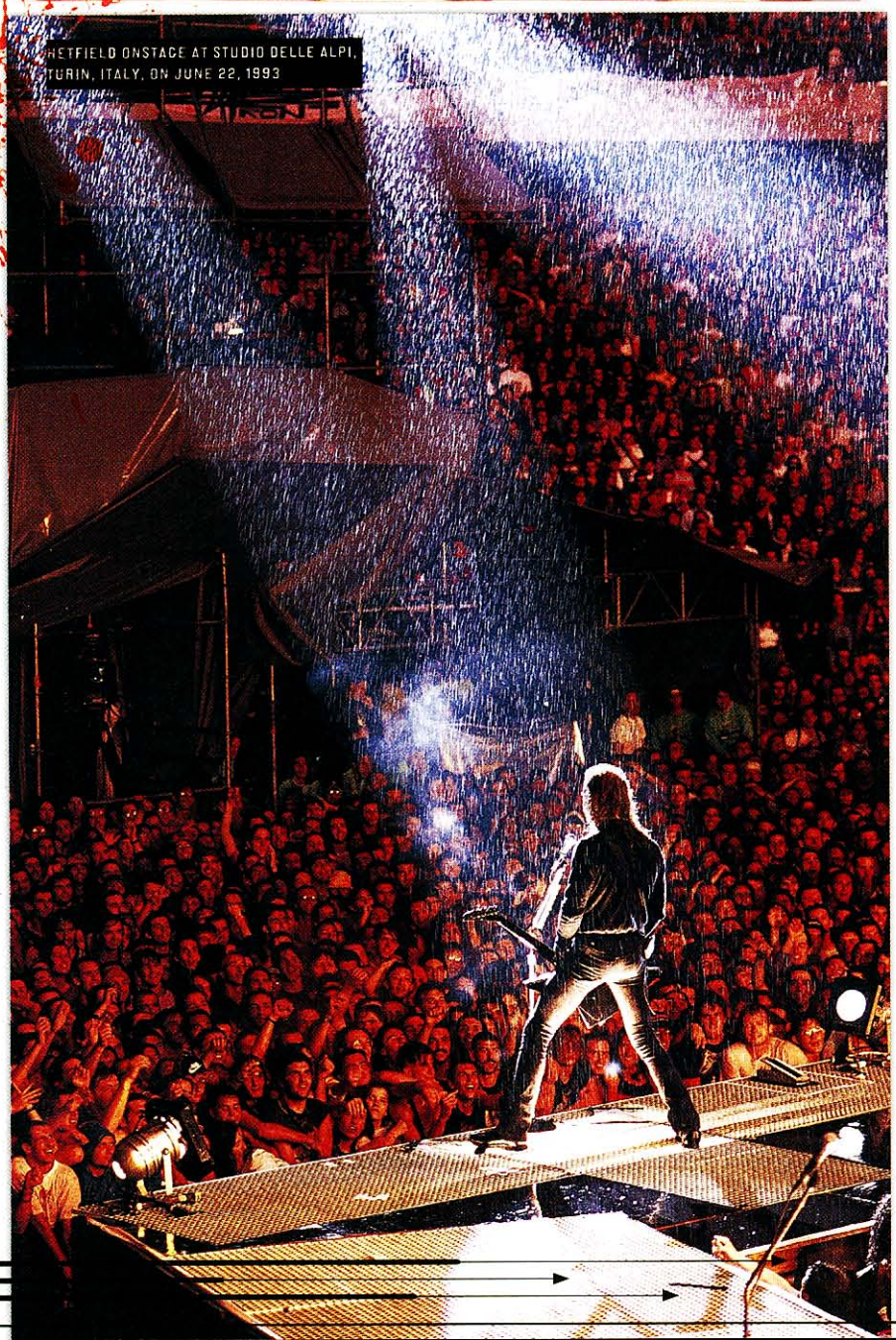
GL What do you look for in an amp?

HETFIELD A smooth, solid, round sound. Something that doesn't sound fake. You can always fiddle around with the EQ later. A lot of modern amps and preamps sound great when you're jamming by yourself, but they don't hold up in a band situation. The sound isn't dense enough, and the lows and highs tend to get soaked up by the bass and cymbals.

GL James, you also tried a variety of guitars,

"WE WANTED TO OFFER SOMETHING NEW TO OUR AUDIENCE."

—KIRK HAMMETT



HETFIELD ONSTAGE AT STUDIO DELLE ALPI, TURIN, ITALY, ON JUNE 22, 1993

which seems a little out of character for you.

HETFIELD My primary guitar was an ESP Explorer with EMG pickups, but I also used a Telecaster, a Gretsch White Falcon with a Bigsby and a Guild 12-string. I used the other guitars just for bits and pieces.

GL Kirk, I understand you didn't use your '74 Gibson Flying V on this record. What was your primary ax?

HAMMETT I used two guitars: a Strat-style ESP with two EMGs and an '89 Gibson Les Paul Deluxe with two EMGs. The way I settled on those guitars is pretty funny. At the beginning of the recording process, I laid down one of my solos 15 times, using 15 different guitars. Then I listened to each track and, without knowing which guitar was which, selected the tone that sounded the best. I finally narrowed it down to the ESP and the Les Paul.

GL And you nailed the solo perfectly each time?

HAMMETT Well, not exactly. [*laughs*] Good enough to A-B them, though. It was kind of interesting to play all those different guitars. Bob brought in a lot of different guitars, too. He's a guitar player—or so he says. [*laughs*]

GL What happened to your black '74 Gibson Flying V?

HAMMETT I used that V on every album prior to this one, but the ESP just sounded a bit rounder. Also, I felt it was time for a change. I bought that V while working at a Burger King. I worked three months—just long enough to be able to afford it. As soon as I made $400, I quit. I don't even know how much it costs to buy a guitar these days. I haven't set foot in a guitar store in ages.

GL The songs on the new album are shorter than usual.

HETFIELD Shorter for Metallica—six minutes instead of 10.

GL It should be easier to get some radio airplay.

HETFIELD That was always a problem. We'd record a song that people liked and wanted to hear on the radio, and the radio bastards wouldn't play it because it was too long. Or they would want to edit it, which we wouldn't allow.

But radio airplay wasn't the whole idea behind us writing shorter songs. It just seemed to us that we had pretty much done the longer song format to death. We were only able to fit about 12 songs in a two-and-a-half-hour show. These shorter songs are going to help a bit—we're going to be able to play more of 'em. [*laughs*] We have one song that has just two riffs in it, which is pretty amazing. It only takes two minutes to get the point across.

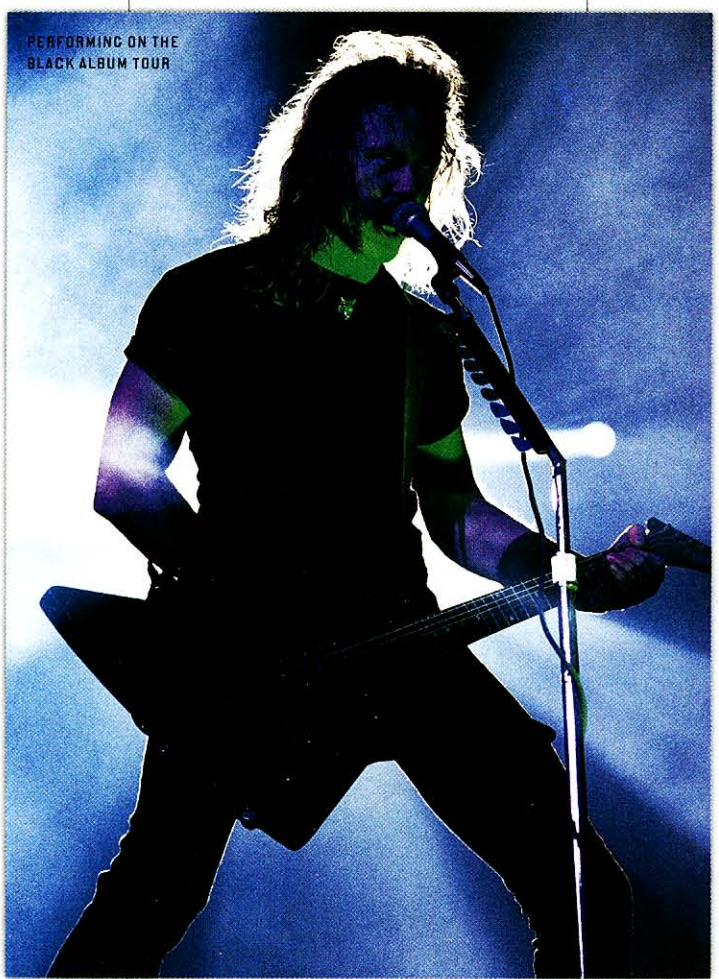
GL Shorter songs mean shorter guitar solos.

HAMMETT In some instances.

GL Also, the new album is less complex, harmonically.

HAMMETT That's true. There are fewer key changes. There aren't many flatted fourth progressions or anything like that—just straight-ahead major and minor keys. The most complex song is probably "Anywhere I Roam," which suggests a Phrygian dominant scale.

> "I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PLAY FAST LIKE KIRK. I DON'T EVEN TRY."
>
> —JAMES HETFIELD



PERFORMING ON THE BLACK ALBUM TOUR

GL Metallica has acquired a reputation for being meticulous in the studio. How often do you go back and repair something you think could be improved?

HAMMETT I fix things all the time. Every time I do a solo, I recheck it and correct things that don't hit the mark.

GL In doing so, do you ever get the feeling that your behavior is less musical than it is... anal retentive?

HAMMETT [*laughs*] It's like this—you have to live with it. When you know you're going to be listening to a performance over 500 times, it's important to be happy with it. Believe me, there are mistakes on our other albums, and I can't bring myself to listen to them. It's torture.

GL Which cuts?

HAMMETT I'm not going to say! [*laughs*] You have to pick them out yourself.

GL What really stands out about Metallica is its feel.

HETFIELD That's what we wanted—a live feel. In the past, Lars and I constructed the rhythm parts without Kirk and Jason, or Lars played to a click by himself. This time I wanted to try playing as a band unit in the studio. It lightens things up, and you get more of a vibe. Everyone was in the same room, and we were able to watch each other. That helped a lot, especially with some of the bass and lead stuff. It also helped that we'd played most of the songs for two months before we entered the studio.

Unfortunately, Lars kind of pussied out at the end. He didn't want everyone there. I guess it's kind of difficult to work in the studio when you're not used to a new song and there are all these people around.

GL Lars is always very involved in the Metallica production process. What is his input with regard to the guitar sound?

HETFIELD He doesn't mess with the guitar sound—just the bass guitar. [*laughs*] He can say whatever he wants, but I think he's pretty confident in my ability to know what's right as far as the guitar goes.

GL While the songs on Metallica are less complex, the orchestration on this album is more sophisticated than on your previous efforts.

HETFIELD That's right. I think the degree of subtlety may shock people. Bob's really good with sound, and we took advantage of that by using different guitars and more vocal harmonies.

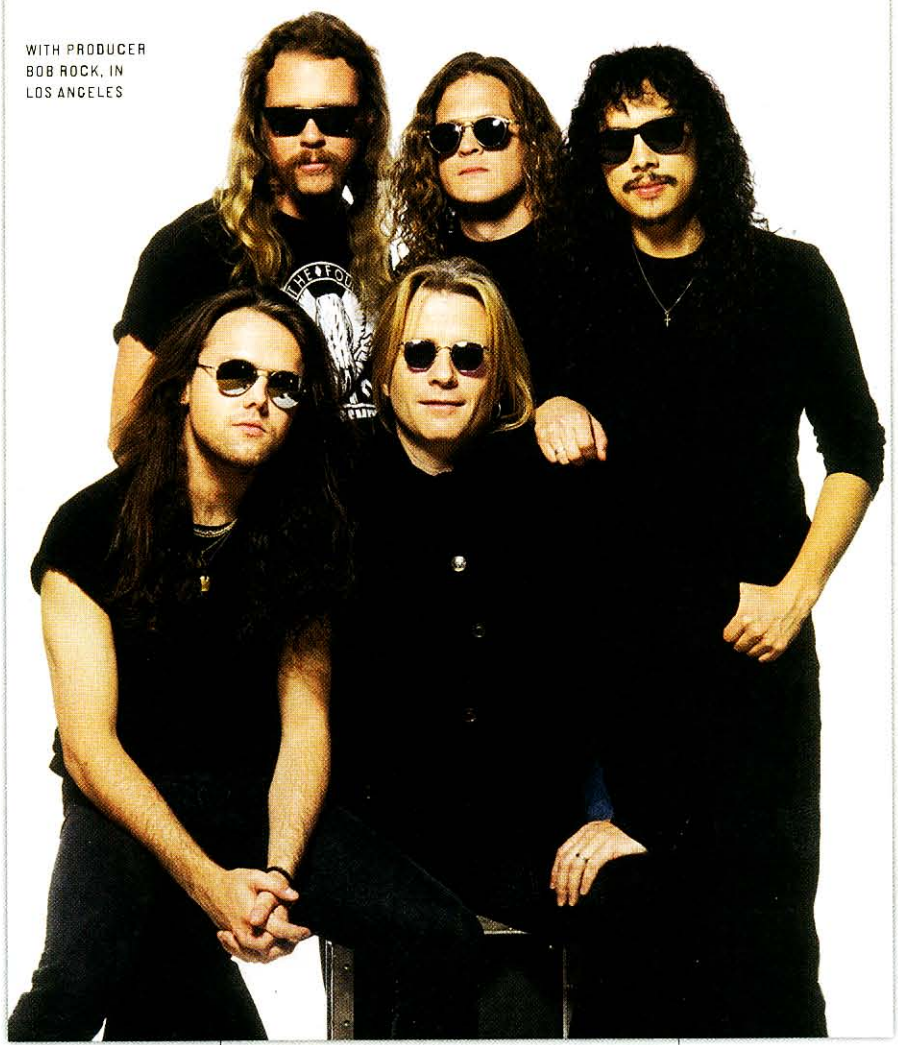
There are fewer guitar overdubs on this record, though. I used to layer 80 guitars in my attempt to create a heavy sound. While making this album, I discovered that sheer quantity doesn't necessarily make for a heavier sound; if anything, overdubs make guitars sound mushier. As far as rhythms go, there are either two or three tracks, and they're split pretty evenly. There is a lot more separation on this album, which also makes it sound punchier. With a pair of headphones, you can tell who's doing what.

GL Were there any songs that didn't make it to the album?

HETFIELD No. We went in and recorded 12. There are no other half-written songs sitting around anywhere. Whatever we wrote is there. It only takes one day of trying to write something to tell if it's going to end up in the dumper. [*laughs*]

GL Kirk, "The Unforgiven" features an un-

ALL IMAGES ROSS HALFIN



WITH PRODUCER BOB ROCK, IN LOS ANGELES

usual solo. How did it evolve?

HAMMETT That was probably the most challenging solo on the album. I had something worked out before I got into the studio, but Bob felt it wasn't quite appropriate. He asked if I could try something dirtier and more sustaining—something more in the Jeff Beck vein. At first I was kind of hurt, but then I realized he was right. I started fingerpicking a chordal thing, and Bob liked the way it sounded. He said, "Why don't you play that entire guitar solo with your fingers and really pull on the strings and slap them against the frets?" It was a cool idea. I did it, and it sounded really percussive. That was the first time I fingerpicked a guitar solo on an album.

GL Did you do anything that challenged your harmonic capabilities?

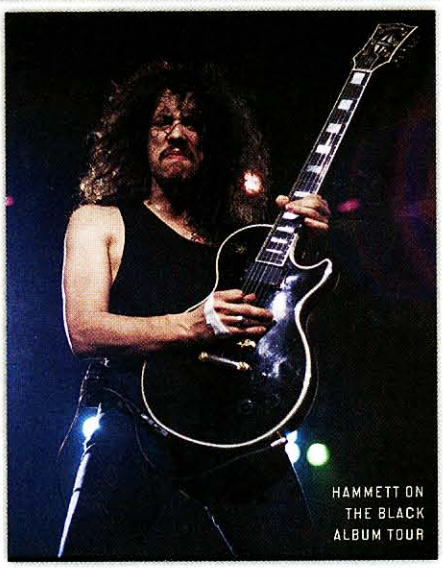
HAMMETT "Of Wolf and Man" reminded me of some of the more progressive music on *Justice*. The rhythm parts jumped from a I chord to a ♭V chord—from E to B♭—which always presents a problem. I was stumped at first, but after a while I just started singing various lines and adapting my vocal melodies for the guitar. I discovered that singing breaks down a lot of imaginary boundaries, and disrupts that tendency to gravitate toward familiar scales and finger patterns on the guitar.

GL Does the band offer much input regarding your guitar solos?

HAMMETT Sometimes I need an objective opinion, and it's good to ask the guys. But you know, I'll only change so much. [*laughs*] They'll make suggestions, but they never tell me what to play. It's more like, "I'm going to play what I think feels good, and if you don't like it, you tell me, and maybe I'll change it." We had a really big argument about a certain guitar solo. I said, "No, this is the way I want it to turn out." And that's the way we kept it. But it's good to have an objective opinion around, because it can lead to other areas and directions you didn't consider in the first place.

GL For example?

HAMMETT The solo that really comes to mind is the one in "The God That Failed." I had this whole thing worked out, and Bob said, "I don't know if that's going to make it. Try something like this." And he half sang, half mumbled something. The only things really audible were the first three out of the eight or nine notes he was trying to sing. So I took those three notes and came up with a phrase that actually worked very well. Between his singing and my interpretation, we mapped out a solo that was a lot different from my original idea.



HAMMETT ON THE BLACK ALBUM TOUR

GL James, why is it that you don't play any solos?

HETFIELD I can't play leads. I can do really cool harmony shit, and on slow songs I can do bendy-feely-type shit, but my strength is in writing riffs. I just have a better feel for rhythm. I'll never be able to play fast like Kirk. I don't even try, because he's the man. He's using a lot of wah-wah lately, which everyone in the band really loves.

GL Kirk, your use of the wah-wah pedal has almost become your signature.

HAMMETT There's something about a wah pedal that really gets my gut going. People will probably say, "He's just hiding behind the wah," but that isn't the case. It's just that those frequencies really bring out a lot of aggression in my approach. Much of my playing is rhythmic and choppy; I use a lot of double stops. The wah just accents all those stops and chops and brings out the rhythmic aspect that much more.

The only problem I've had with my Vox wah is its tendency to move around on the floor. So now it sits on a rubber mat that says in big letters, "Kirk's Wah-Wah Rug." [*laughs*]

GL Your solos on this album seem much more fluid than those you played in the past. What's your secret?

HAMMETT We toured for a year and a half before we recorded this album, and that really helped my playing a lot. I also started listening to different kinds of music, which helped broaden my perspective. For example, I've been experimenting with slide guitar.

I also discovered a new recording process that really works for me. On *Metallica*, I recorded six or seven different guitar solos for almost every song, took the best aspects of each solo, mapped out a master solo and made a composite. Then I learned how to play the composite solo, tightened it up and replayed it for the final version. The only bad thing about that process is that it led to a lot of arguments.

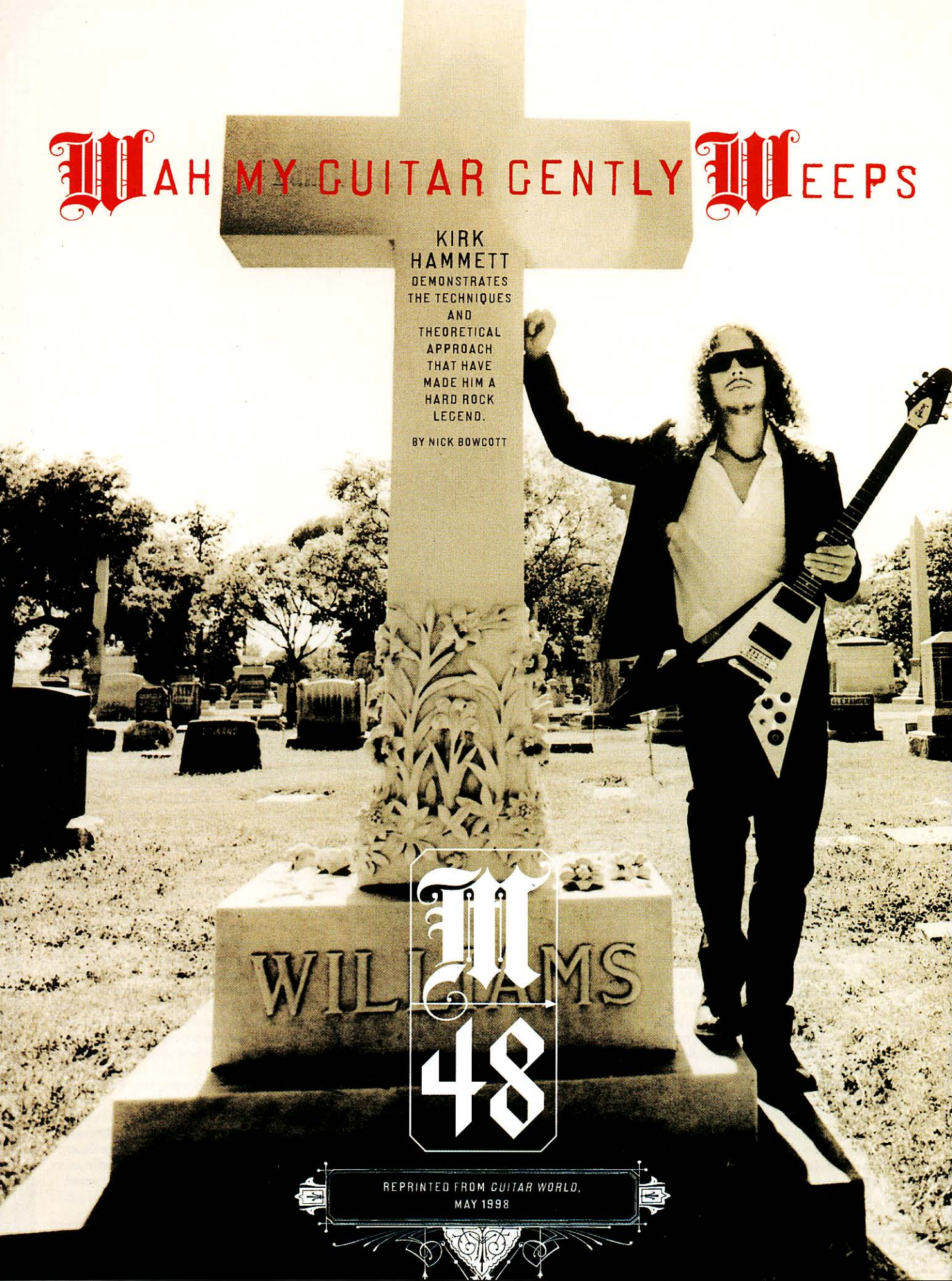
GL Didn't being in the studio for so long drive you crazy?

HETFIELD Yes, it did! [*laughs*] Very much so. I don't remember doing anything else. I don't remember not living in the studio. I'm itching for people to hear this album because I'm sick of hearing it myself. That's the ultimate feeling—when someone hears your shit and says, "That's good!" And I go, "I know, but it's good to hear you say it!" GL

WAH MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS

KIRK HAMMETT DEMONSTRATES THE TECHNIQUES AND THEORETICAL APPROACH THAT HAVE MADE HIM A HARD ROCK LEGEND.

BY NICK BOWCOTT



REPRINTED FROM *GUITAR WORLD*, MAY 1998

METALLICA'S KIRK HAMMETT IS A giant among men. There isn't a guitar poll he hasn't won, and his popularity runs high among fans and critics alike. Few would dispute the contention that he is, with the possible exception of Edward Van Halen, the most influential hard rock/metal lead guitarist alive today.

It's no wonder that *Guitar World*'s readers chose him as the first inductee into the magazine's Hall of Fame in 2002. "I'm actually quite flattered and impressed, and a little bit shocked and dumbfounded," Kirk said of the final ballot count, which placed him ahead of his own heroes Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton and Michael Schenker. "There's a little bit of 'Why me?' in there for good measure, too."

Kirk answers that question for himself in this groundbreaking lesson, in which he presents an intimate look at his technique.

...AND RHYTHM FOR ALL

JAMES HETFIELD, OF COURSE, is known as the rhythmic rock on which Metallica stands. As a result, Hammett begins the lesson by focusing on a side of his own playing for which he is perhaps underrated. "Although I'm a lead guitarist, I'd say that a good 95 percent of my time onstage is spent playing rhythm," Hammett says. "Consequently, it doesn't matter how great your lead playing is—if your rhythm work sucks, you're not gonna go very far. When you're playing rhythm in a band like Metallica, what your right [*picking*] hand does is really important. Obviously, what your left hand is doing is pretty darned crucial too, but, as a lot of our riffs involve syncopated open-string notes and relatively simple-to-finger power chords, it's often the right-hand picking and muting techniques that can make or break a song."

KAPTAIN KRUNCH

BEFORE GETTING DOWN to the nuts and bolts of his muting and picking, Hammett takes some time to dispel a few common misconceptions about his band's mighty rhythm tone. "The first thing I gotta say is that Metallica's crunch sound is often cleaner than people expect," he says. "Actually, to be honest, my taste in tone has definitely changed over the years. I don't like to use as much distortion these days—I prefer my tone to be nice and crisp. Don't get me wrong, distortion is great, but there's definitely a point where having too much turns your tone to mush. The low end loses its tightness and your overall tone gets flabby, with no definition or cut.

"When you're first starting out, there's always the temptation to hide behind distortion because it lets you get away with murder. But, when it comes to rhythm work, you've gotta back off that gain control a bit, especially if you're playing with another guitarist. Actually, over the years, James and I have found that besides giving our tone more definition and cut, backing off the gain makes us play our riffs better because we can't get away with being sloppy."

Many guitar-playing Metallica fans assume that Hammett and Hetfield scoop the mid frequencies from their rhythm tone. "Well, we used to do that," Kirk confirms, "but while making *Metallica* [*1991*] we rediscovered midrange and how much louder and fuller our guitars sound with it in there."

FIGURE 1

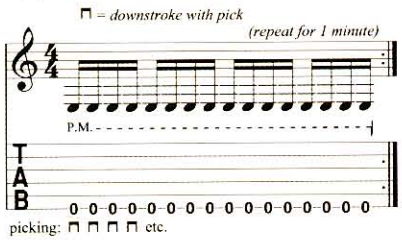


FIGURE 2

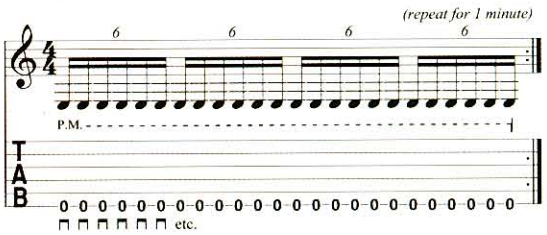


FIGURE 3

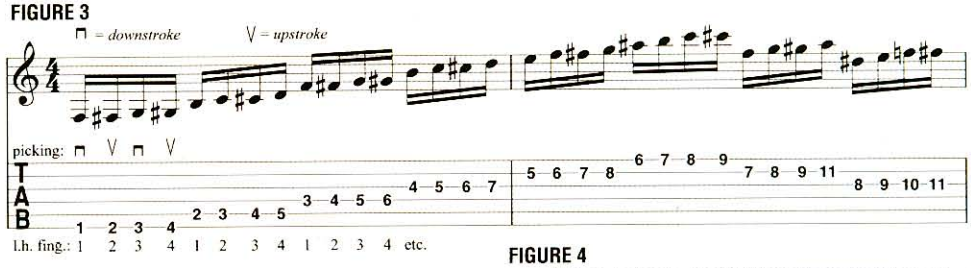


FIGURE 4

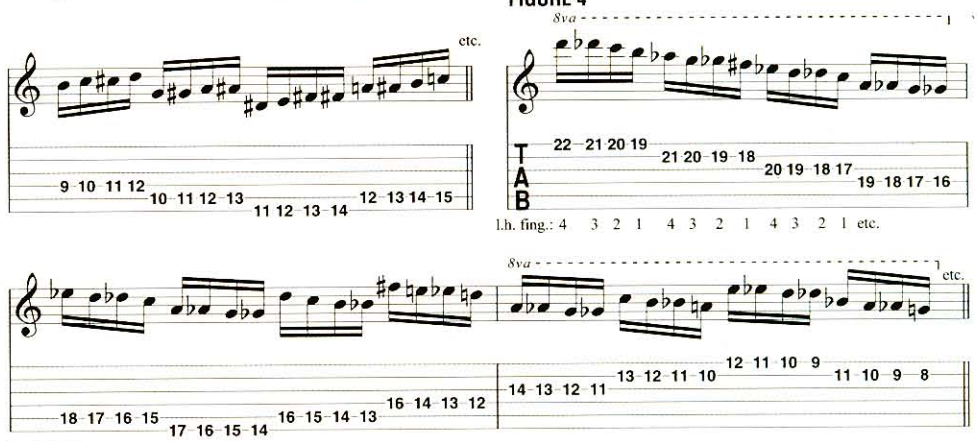
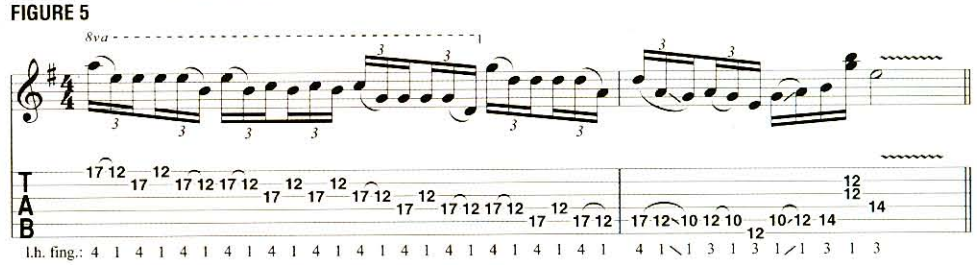


FIGURE 5



THE POINT IS MUTE

"A LOT OF OUR RIFFS involve right-hand palm muting [*P.M.*]," Hammett says. "It's actually a pretty easy technique to master." Here, he offers his list of

ROSS HALFIN

suggestions for performing it.

1. To palm-mute a chord or note correctly, rest the lower part of your right palm on the strings right where they go over the bridge. Don't go too far away from the bridge, though, otherwise the notes will lose their definition and become dull thuds.

2. If you play a guitar with a fixed bridge—like a Les Paul or the ESP Explorer Hetfield uses—you can be pretty heavy handed when muting. "But if your guitar has a whammy system that's set up 'floating,' like mine is, you've gotta be a bit more careful, though," Hammett cautions. "If you lean too hard on a floating bridge when you're palm-muting, you'll end up pushing the bridge down and sounding like shit because your strings will all go sharp."

UP ON THE DOWNSIDE

WHEN PERFORMING MANY of Metallica's more brutal motifs, Hammett believes that, "to attain maximum heaviness, you've got to pick using downstrokes exclusively. It just sounds tighter, chunkier and more aggressive when you do that," he says. "It's important to be proficient at playing upstrokes, too, because they have a different attack, and that can be useful sometimes. I can remember seeing old Deep Purple videos and noticing that Ritchie Blackmore picked upwards on a lot of his riffs."

Hammett adds that even those who are extremely adept at downpicking must observe a speed limit: "We play the intro to 'Master of Puppets'—eighth notes at about 220 beats per minute—using all downstrokes. Although that tempo isn't our absolute limit, it's definitely getting there. For a fast [*16th notes at 160 bpm*] riff like the one at the beginning of 'Whiplash' [*from* Kill 'Em All], alternate picking is a must."

WRIST WATCH

"ONE THING I'VE NOTICED over the years," Hammett says, "is that there are two distinct approaches to picking: those who pick with their wrist and those who pick with their whole forearm. I've found that you have a lot more control over your picking when you pivot from your wrist, as opposed to pivoting from your elbow, because there's just less overall movement going on. By picking this way, you can fine-tune your right-hand technique into a very precise and controlled wrist maneuver. Basically, the smaller and more economical the movement, the better.

"Getting this picking approach down can really make a big difference—especially when you're playing a fast riff using all downstrokes. Also, when you pick by moving your forearm, it's a lot harder to palm-mute the strings by the bridge. When you pivot from your wrist, though, it's easy to get that palm-muted 'chunk' happening with your right hand because it's hardly moving."

FIGURE 6
Moveable major pentatonic box

FIGURE 7
Moveable minor pentatonic box

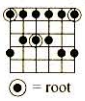


FIGURE 8
Moveable minor blues box

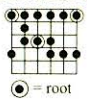


FIGURE 9a
A minor blues

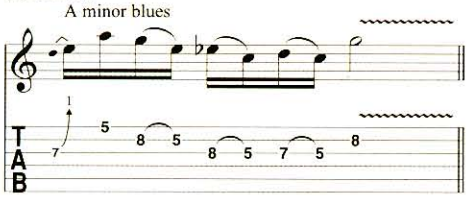


FIGURE 9b
A minor blues/Dorian

FIGURE 10a
E minor blues

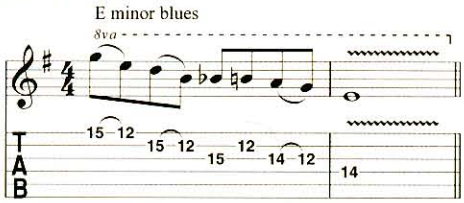
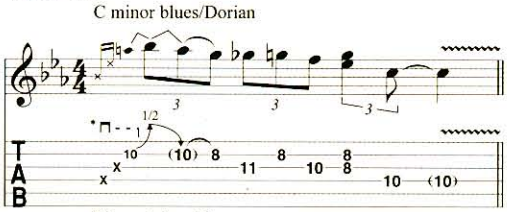


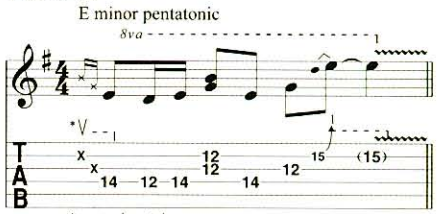
FIGURE 10b
E minor blues/Dorian

FIGURE 11
C minor blues/Dorian



**downstroke pick sweep*

FIGURE 12
E minor pentatonic



**upstroke pick sweep*

START ME UP

A KEEN ADVOCATE OF downpicking, Hammett is also pretty hot on the topic of warming up. Appropriately, the two simple picking drills shown in **FIGURES 1** and **2** also happen to be great warm-up exercises. "There is no 'right' way to warm up before a gig because everyone's approach is different," he says. "Some guitarists don't warm up at all, believing that they'll play better going out there fresh. I've always found that, in order to do my best, I *have* to warm up. While many players are concerned that if they don't warm up, they'll hurt their hands, I just worry about a different kind of pain—one that comes from the embarrassment of standing before an audience and being unable to play what I have to play. Hell, I even do a quick warm-up routine before I try something out in a music store."

FIGURES 3 and **4** illustrate the ascending and descending versions of a warm-up exercise that Hammett picked up from a friend. "These two exercises are really good for developing coordination between your left and right hands," he says. "They're also cool because they cover the entire fretboard and require you to use all four left-hand fingers." Yes, all *four* fingers. Hammett advises guitarists that don't use their pinkie to start. "It's there, so why not use it? When I first learned to play, someone told me, 'Hey, you'd better use your little finger. Otherwise, it's just gonna hang there.' I've used it ever since. It definitely helps me play certain wide-stretch things [*plays the E minor pentatonic run in* **FIGURE 5**] that I probably couldn't reach if I were just a three-fingered player."

Hammett recommends using strict alternate picking (down, up, down, up, etc.) when performing **FIGURES 3** and **4**, and pivoting from the wrist, of course. "When it comes to playing fast, a lot of my colleagues only pick every third or fourth note and slur [*hammer-on, pull-off, bend, slide or tap*] the rest. Although I like the legato [*smooth*] feel you can get using hammer-ons and pull-offs, I think that if you want to be a well-rounded player you should be able to pick every note in a fast run. I've found that by picking more of the notes in a run, I have a lot more attack, and I can get more accents happening and convey percussive ideas too."

SHAPE SHIFT: SHRED IS DEAD

ALTHOUGH QUITE CAPABLE of playing lightning-fast lead licks and runs, Hammett has not been doing much of that of late. When he first joined Metallica in the early Eighties, he was a self-described "shredder" and a pretty serious one at that, even taking lessons from the maestro, Joe Satriani. In the Nineties, however, Hammett's approach has become much more laid back, even bluesy.

"Ten or 15 years ago, I was heavily into Uli Roth [*ex-Scorpions*] and all those contemporary 'shred' guitarists of the Eighties—you know, the Steve Vais and the Yngwie Malmsteens," he recalls. "But then, sometime around 1990, I just left that whole virtuoso thing behind. I basically decided, Screw what everyone around me is doing. From now on I'm just going to play what I think is important to me and to Metallica's music. So I gave the big finger to all the technical wizardry trends and just went off and did what I felt was best for the songs. And, as it happens, a lot of the time, what's best for the song is often something relatively simple and bluesy. After all, the blues is all about tapping into your emotions."

Hammett's change of musical pace and approach is clearly reflected in the names of his current guitar heroes: Stevie Ray Vaughan, Johnny Winter, Eric Clapton, Buddy Guy, Jimmy Page, B.B. King, Freddie King and Warren Haynes. "In my opinion, these players can pack more of an emotional punch with a few bent notes than a lot of shredders can with oodles of 90-mile-per-hour scales.

"Though I still enjoy playing in a high-tech way every once in a while, nowadays I'm definitely more into space, sustain and tone. I'm always trying to work more space into my playing. A lot of shredders don't seem to realize how space can be used constructively. They're just hell-bent on impressing you with how many notes they can fit in. To me, those players sound like they're hyperventilating musically. The reason shred earned such a bad rap is because so many guitarists didn't use technique tastefully or constructively.

These days, Hammett tends to use speed as a texture. "Knowing when to play fast, when to play slow and being able to mix it up makes all the difference in the world. There are some guitarists who basically play at one speed, and because of that their playing sounds flat and one-dimensional." He adds, "It's good to strive to be three-dimensional so that what you play has a lot of ups and downs, dips and so forth. You've got to let your playing breathe. You've got to let your tone breathe."

As a result of his "slow-hand" approach, Hammett doesn't employ modes or exotic scales as much as he used to: "The major pentatonic [*see* **FIGURE 6**] and minor pentatonic [*see* **FIGURE 7**] are cool.

FIGURE 13
A minor pentatonic

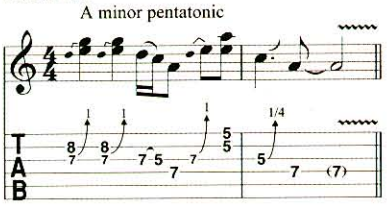


FIGURE 14a
E minor pentatonic

FIGURE 14b

FIGURE 14c

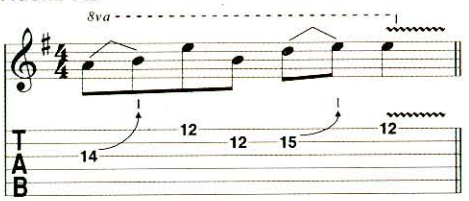


FIGURE 14d

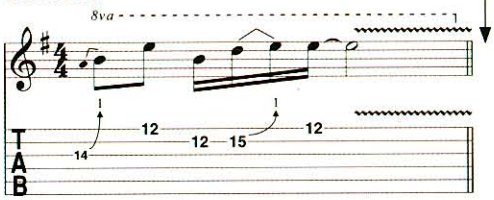


FIGURE 14e

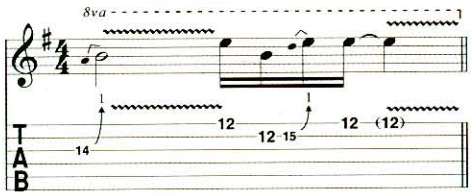


FIGURE 14f

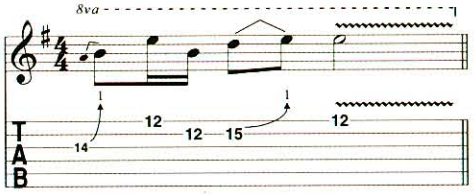
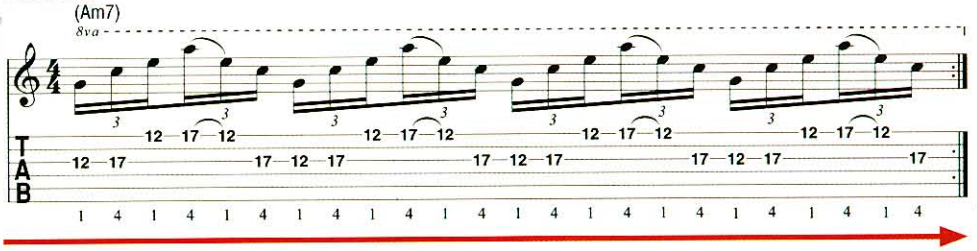


FIGURE 15
(Am7)



They're the scales that I pretty much base my entire playing style on now."

THE SPICE IS RIGHT

"SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT the only way to come up with new soloing ideas is to learn more scales," Hammett says disapprovingly. "I don't subscribe to that way of thinking, because what the hell happens when you run out of scales and modes to learn? Anyhow, you don't have to know every exotic scale under the sun to come up with creative and exciting leads. I mean, there are only six notes within a standard minor-blues box [*see* **FIGURE 8**], but there's so much you can do with them. I always find myself stumbling across different ways to spice up my well-worn blues licks—ways that are so unbelievably simple."

Hammett proceeds to whip up a few examples of how to "spice up" an overused blues lick. First he plays **FIGURE 9a** ("old"), then **9b** ("spiced-up"). "They're virtually the same A minor blues lick, except in the second one [**FIGURE 9b**] you bend up to the last note [*G*] from a half step, or one fret, below [*F♯*]. This very simple, subtle nuance gives that final note a completely different type of vibrato sound and a crying, vocal-like quality that adds emotion to the lick."

Now compare **FIGURES 10a** ("old") and **10b** ("spiced-up"), two versions of another blues lick, these in E minor pentatonic. The only difference between them, Hammett says, is that the spiced-up version has "a couple of trills and double-stops thrown in for extra excitement."

Here are several other easy, Kirk Hammett-approved ways to spice up your lead work:

1) Use String Rakes This technique involves muting the strings marked with an "x" by lightly resting one of your left-hand fingers across them and then quickly dragging, or "raking," your pick across them, as indicated. "Kind of like percussive sweep picking," Hammett says, playing the C minor pentatonic lick depicted in **FIGURE 11** to illustrate his point. "Doing this adds extra emotion, attitude and emphasis to the initial string bend in this run. I do a lot of upstroke raking when I'm soloing, too." He demonstrates by playing the E minor pentatonic lick shown in **FIGURE 12.** "I guess I got into this by listening to Ritchie Blackmore. He does it all the time."

2) Use Quarter-Step Bends "One of the coolest things you can do to add bite and tension to a solo is bend certain notes just a tad so you're right in between two notes," Hammett says, playing the simple A minor pentatonic lick shown in **FIGURE 13**. The quarter-step bend occurs at the very beginning of bar 2. "Great blues players do this type of thing all the time. Stevie Ray Vaughan was especially good at it. He'd even add a quarter-step bend to notes he'd already bent up by one or even two whole steps."

3) Paraphrase "This is a great way of rejuvenating a tired old lick. The next time you find yourself guilty of recycling the same exact licks over and over, try taking a few of them and seeing how many different ways you can phrase them by merely altering the relative timing of each note and nothing else." To demonstrate this approach, Hammett plays the A minor pentatonic motif illustrated in **FIGURE 14a** and then immediately rephrases it five different ways, as

depicted in **FIGURES 14b–f**. "I realize this is an unbelievably basic concept, but most of the good ones are, and for that reason they're often overlooked," he says.

4) Use String Skipping and Wide Fretboard Stretches "Wide fret-hand stretches and string skipping can both open up new doors in your playing because each technique introduces you to intervals that you probably wouldn't normally use." **FIGURE 15** is a cool Hammett lick that hammers this point home by combining a five-fret stretch with some string skipping. The result is "an Am7 arpeggio [*A C E G*] that will work in just about any A minor context."

5) Use a Wah-Wah Pedal "Every time I step on my wah-wah, it seems to kick-start my playing because its sound gives me instant inspiration. When the pedal is all the way down [*closed*], it gives me super aggression, and when it's all the way up [*open*], it adds a fluid coolness. Also, sweeping the thing through its complete range is a great way of accenting certain notes and phrases. I'm a total wah-wah freak. I think I'll die with one underneath my foot."

While Hammett greatly admires Jimi Hendrix's wah use, "the guy who really turned my head around was Brian Robertson of Thin Lizzy," he says. "He had a totally unique technique, and he made me realize that there are stylized ways of using the wah. Instead of using the pedal to accent individual notes, like most people do, Brian would do long, slow sweeps over a succession of notes to create and augment tension. His solo in 'Opium Trail' [*from* Bad Reputation] is a classic, and pretty much everything he did on Thin Lizzy's *Jailbreak* album is amazing, too.

"There are a lot of great things you can do with a Cry Baby Wah, and anyone who dismisses it as being a one-dimensional effect obviously hasn't looked or listened deeply enough. To me, the wah-wah is a tonal crayon you can use to color many aspects of your playing."

FIGURE 16 illustrates five of the many wah-wah phrasing approaches possible while simply ascending and descending the A minor pentatonic scale.

6) Listen to Other Instruments "Listening to other instruments and then trying to copy their licks on guitar has definitely helped me expand my playing vocabulary," Hammett says. "There's nothing wrong with copying from other people, as long as you personalize what you copy. David Bowie once called himself 'a very tasty thief,' and that's what you should aim to be. I've found that listening to and copying great jazz horn players opened up completely new horizons for me.

"If you're interested in getting into this type of stuff, two albums you must have are *Kind of Blue* by Miles Davis and John Coltrane's *Blue Train*. Although both of these guys play some mind-blowing, complex stuff, some of their greatest musical ideas are relatively simple." Hammett puts his money where his mouth is by playing **FIGURE 17**, an E minor lick he "stole" from Coltrane. "It's unbelievably simple, but it's so percussive and melodic at the same time that it floors me every time I hear it."

FIGURE 16 wah-wah phrasing possibilities

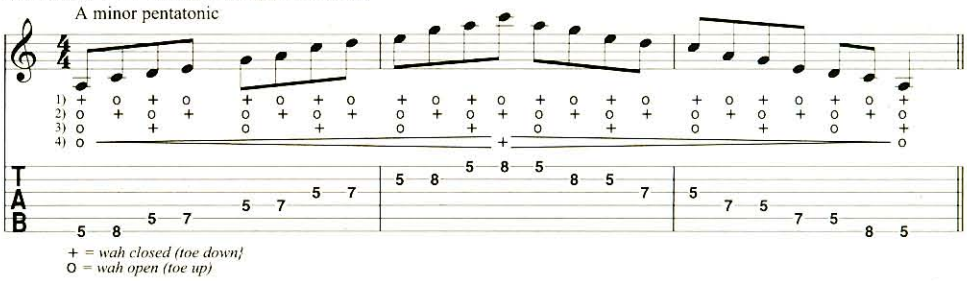


FIGURE 17

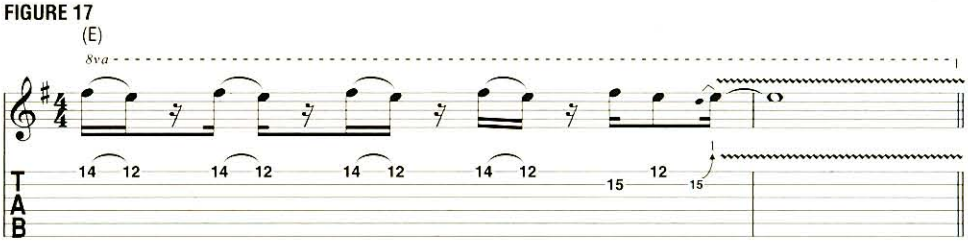
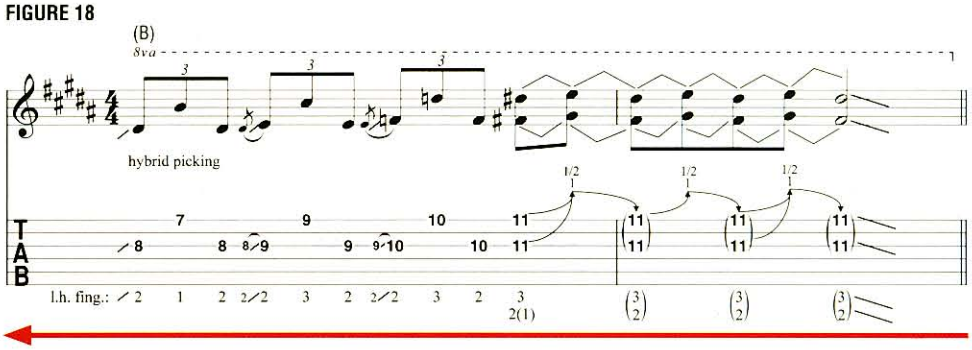


FIGURE 18



7) Listen Without Prejudice "I believe it's really important to listen to diverse forms of music, especially when you find yourself stuck in a playing rut. Don't cut yourself off from potentially great stuff by being narrow-minded. For example, not all country music sounds like Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart." Check out some of Albert Lee's work, for instance; he's an amazing guitarist in anyone's book. And what about the Allman Brothers? Their unique blend of country, blues and rock is unbelievable, and every guitarist can learn something from the late, great Duane Allman." To demonstrate his point, Hammett plays **FIGURE 18**, "a string-skipping, E major country blues lick inspired by listening to the Allmans' classic *At Fillmore East* album."

When performing **FIGURE 18**, Hammett sounded all the G-string notes with picked downstrokes while plucking the high E-string notes with his bare ring finger—a technique known as *hybrid picking*. "Doing this makes the run a lot easier to play, because you don't have to jump back and forth over the B string with your pick," he remarks. "Another neat thing about hybrid picking is that the notes you pick with your fingers have a slightly different tone and attack from those you hit with your pick."

SOLO M.O.

OUR LOOK AT KIRK HAMMETT'S style wouldn't be complete without some concrete suggestions from the man on how to approach a lead break. "Although I don't have any set game plan for my solos, I'm totally from the school that says, 'Start out with a great idea, introduce a second great idea, resolve it and then end with a bang.' I always strive to have an intro, a midsection and an end. When I have those things, I usually just improvise in between them. I also try to make every note count. Basically, I believe that a solo is a song within a song, and that's definitely how I feel when I'm working on a solo. I feel like I'm composing a song."

FINAL THOUGHTS

HAMMETT CLOSES HIS DISCOURSE with some deeply felt words he directs at all musicians. "Learn as much as you can, but when it comes down to the moment, throw it all out the window and play from inside yourself. I think that playing what you feel at the moment is really important. It doesn't matter if you know a billion scales or just two—trying to capture that emotion and putting it across is the name of the game. As far as I'm concerned, if you manage to channel your feelings through your playing—and whoever is listening understands the message—then you've succeeded as a musician.

"To achieve this goal, you've basically got to be yourself and try to be more fluid with your feelings. You shouldn't use scales as the middle man between your heart and fingers because sometimes that knowledge can be a barrier to what you really want to say. If you can eliminate that middle man and have a constant thought process that flows from your heart, through your fingers and out of your amp, then you've won the battle right there." GT

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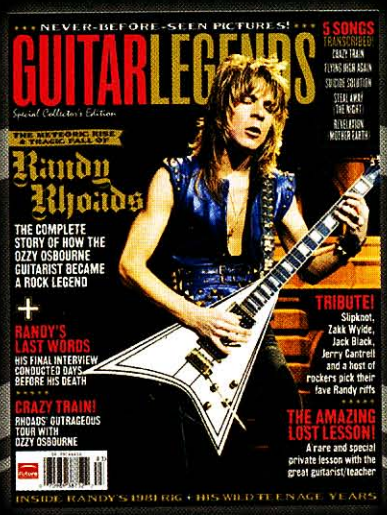

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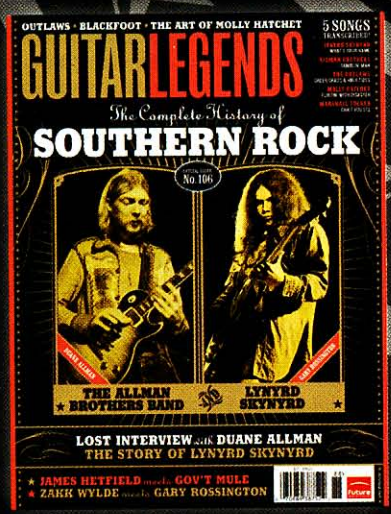

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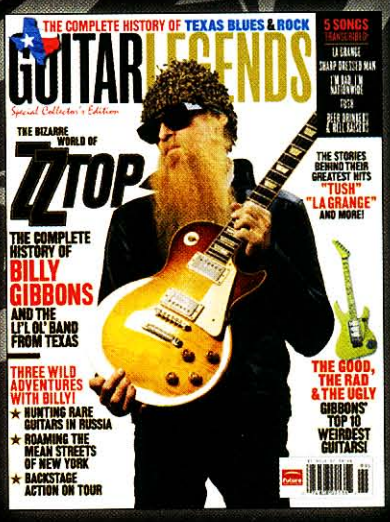

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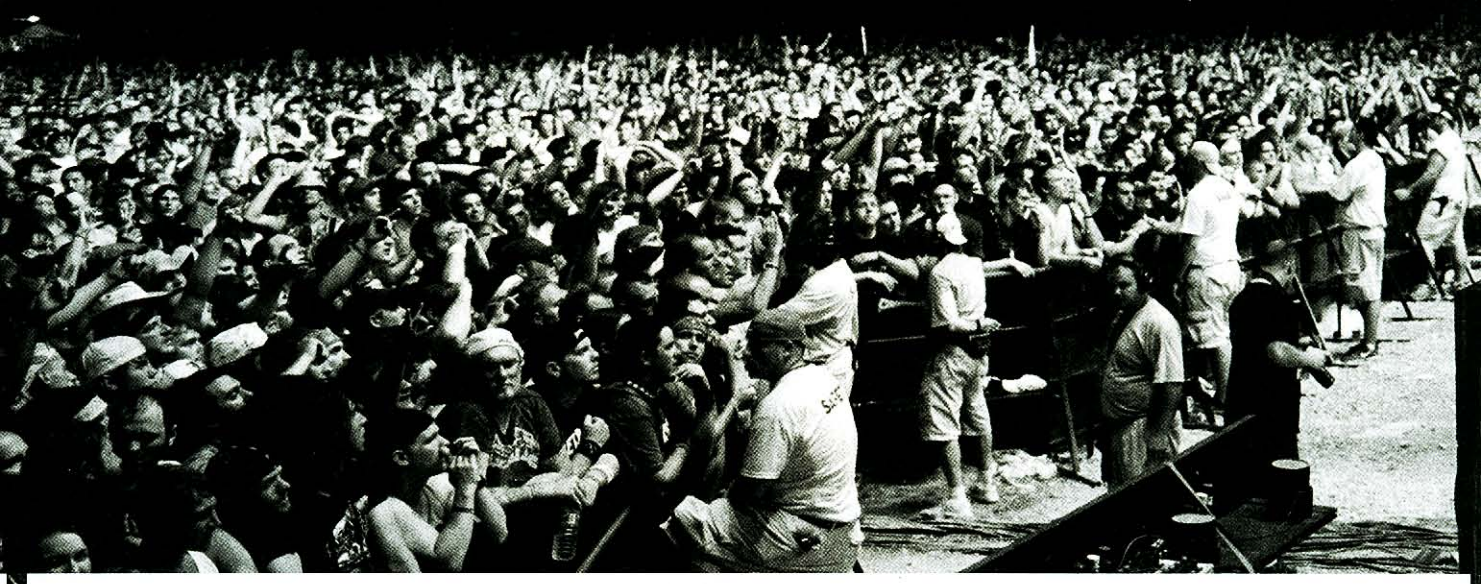
TO LIVE IS TO

HAVING NEARLY SELF-DESTRUCTED DURING THE MAKING OF 2003'S **ST. ANGER**, **METALLICA** RETURNED IN 2008 WITH A NEW SENSE OF PURPOSE AND A KILLER NEW ALBUM: **DEATH MAGNETIC**.

BY BRANDON GEIST | PHOTOS BY CLAY PATRICK MCBRIDE



"YOU GUYS SUCK."

It's three words that Metallica frontman James Hetfield, lead guitarist Kirk Hammett and bassist Robert Trujillo probably don't hear very often. Especially not to their faces...and when they're onstage, to boot. But here they are, sound checking with an instrumental rendition of the Misfits' "Die Die Die," in a tiny, maybe 150-person-capacity Nashville dive club, very accurately named the Basement, and dead center in front of them is their heckler, leaning on the barrier, chewing gum, his hips cocked in a posture rife with attitude.

Who does this guy think he is?

Hearing the taunt, Hetfield, Hammett and Trujillo look up, squinting through the glare of the stage lights to identify their antagonist. After a second they see him and recognize him. His name? Lars Ulrich.

Unbeknownst to his bandmates, the Metallica drummer has slipped into the darkened venue, fashionably late. His jacket glistens with fresh rain drops—seconds ago, outside, the heavens let loose a sudden June shower, and the long line of Metallica fan-club members waiting along the Basement's driveway are doubtlessly getting soaked to the bone.

Recognizing Ulrich, his bandmates laugh. The drummer is kidding, of course. The many haters may say that Metallica haven't made a good record since 1991's the "Black Album," or worse, 1988's *...And Justice for All*; that they came off like pussies in the 2004 documentary *Some Kind of Monster*, which showed the band teetering on the brink of break-up, with Hetfield entering rehab and all the bandmates almost unable to talk to each other without "performance enhancement coach" Phil Towle in the room. But Metallica categorically do not suck. They prove it with their rip-roaring new epic of an album, *Death Magnetic* (Warner Bros.).

And they prove it again at the Basement on this rainy day by turning in a positively electric performance. The gig is a secret, announced only to members of the Met-

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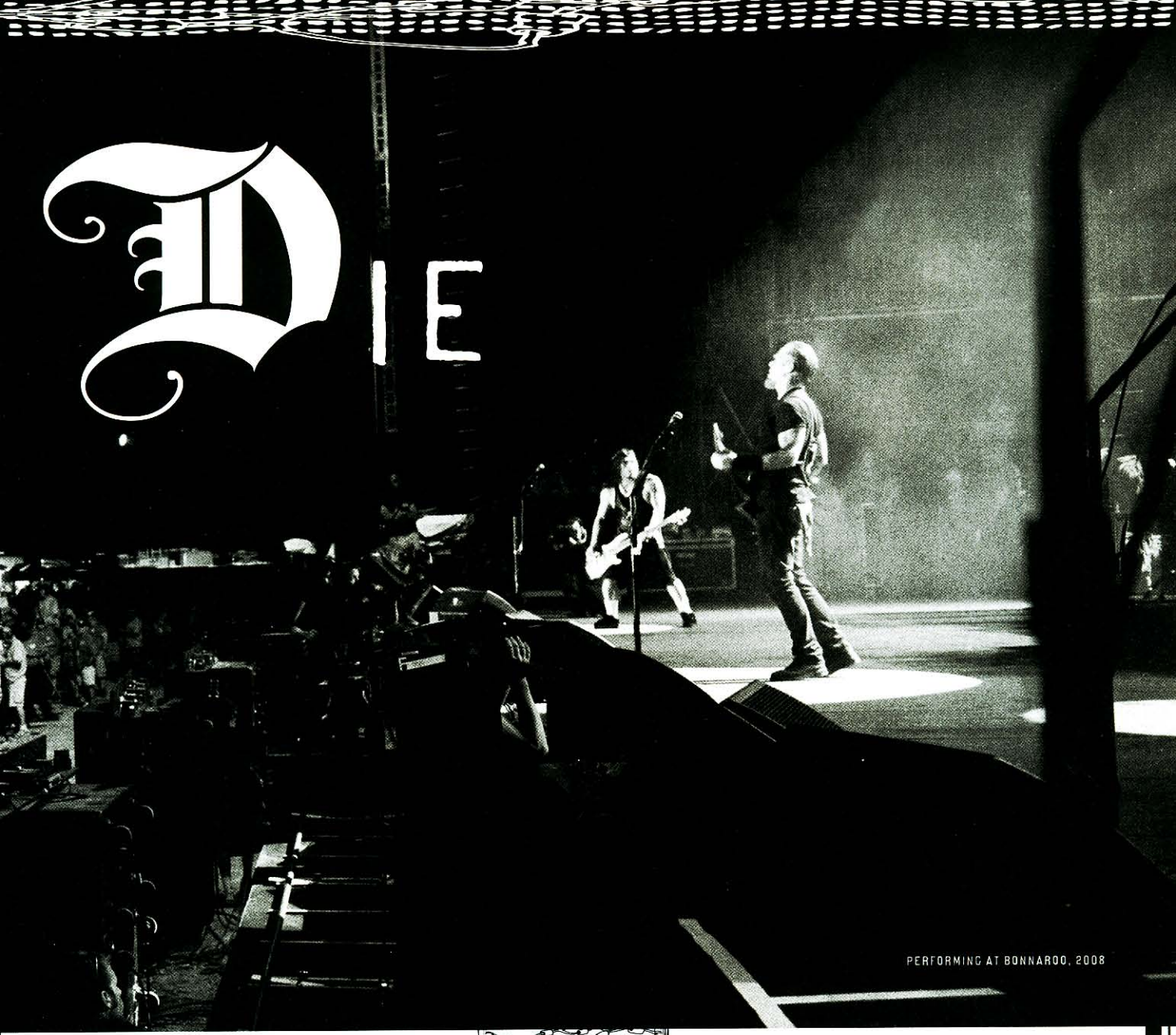


PERFORMING AT BONNAROO, 2008

Club, and it is one for the ages. After years of playing stadiums and relying on massive sound systems, Trinitron monitors and pyrotechnics, a band of Metallica's size could easily be exposed as a toothless relic here in an intimate venue, where precision and intensity are the only currency.

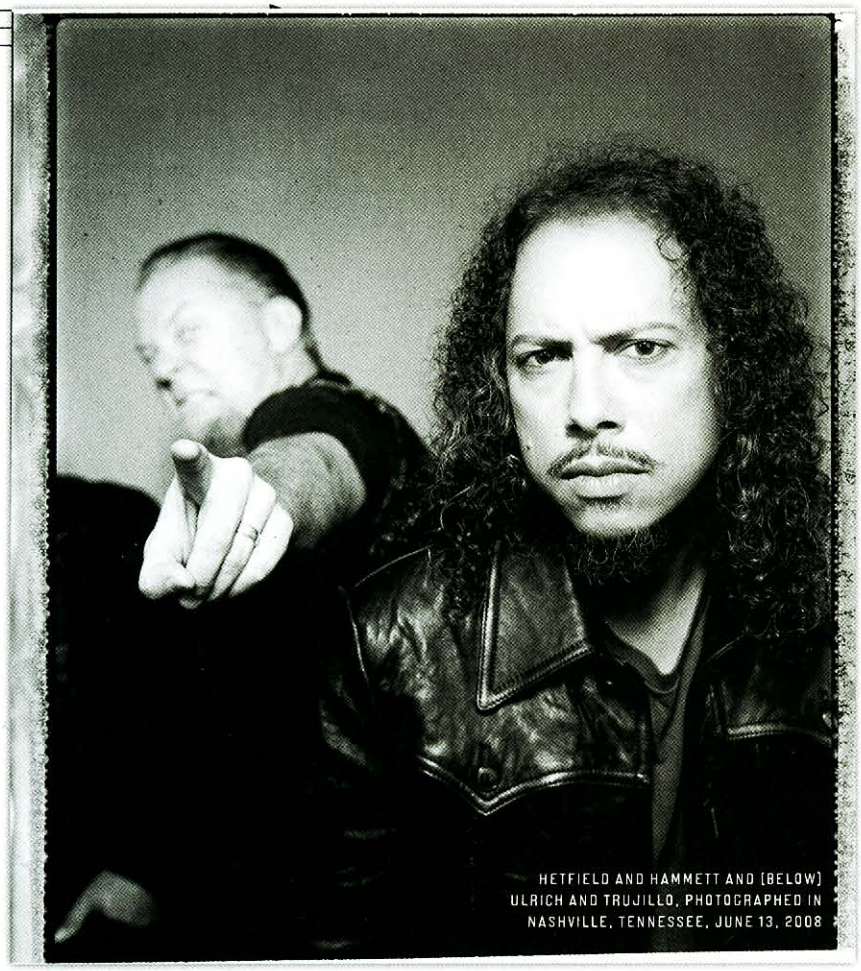
From the first song, it's obvious that Metallica still have all their teeth. They kick off with "No Remorse," from their now legendary 1983 full-length debut, *Kill 'Em All*. It's a fitting opener since, according to Hetfield, the last time Metallica played a club this small was when they toured for that album. It's also an appropriate choice since Metallica show little to no remorse over the course of the 45-minute-plus set, throwing themselves fully into every note of whiplashing classics like "Sanitarium," "Harvester of Sorrow" and "Sad but True," sending sweat, hair and fists flying. Dead center, clenching down on the barrier, where Ulrich taunted his bandmates just minutes before, stands 20-something

> "A LOT OF THE ALBUM REVOLVES AROUND THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE OF METALLICA."
>
> —JAMES HETFIELD

Ron from New York, who had been following Metallica around on the European tour they just flew back from earlier today. He counts this as his 102nd Metallica gig. Asked afterward which of those many shows stands out, he answers without hesitation: "This one!"

About two-thirds into the set, Ulrich scrambles up from behind his drums and takes Hammett's mic. "I just want to say, you guys have supported us for so long here in the Basement," he salutes the crowd, tongue in cheek, "but tonight there are people here from Warner Bros., so maybe, with your help, we can finally get out of the Basement—though we love it here—and get a fucking record deal!"

It's a telling joke. Having come close to breaking up while making 2003's *St. Anger*, Metallica almost seem to have been reborn as a new, much younger band. The effect is partly a result of seeing them playing such a minuscule club; it is also due to the fact that Hetfield, Hammett and Ulrich—now in their mid forties—are in better



HETFIELD AND HAMMETT AND (BELOW) ULRICH AND TRUJILLO, PHOTOGRAPHED IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, JUNE 13, 2008

mental, spiritual and physical health than they have been in years.

Mostly, though, it is a consequence of Metallica having peered into the abyss and come away with a renewed love and hunger for what they do. Perhaps nowhere is this clearer than on *Death Magnetic*, a record created with the explicit mission statement of trying to tap into just that sort of youthful passion and drive. As Hetfield describes the "mantra" given to them by producer Rick Rubin: "Go back to what you were thinking at the time of *Master of Puppets*. You're writing a set list to impress a record company. You want to get signed. Here's your showcase list. Be hungry."

The result is Metallica's most ferocious album in decades. It's full of high-velocity songs, head-spinning riffs, sinuous dual-guitar harmonies and off-kilter rhythms and time-signature shifts. And, unlike *St. Anger*, it has plenty of guitar solos. Amid all the blast and bluster, *Death Magnetic* features some of the dynamic touchstones of Metallica's classic triptych: *Ride the Lightning*, *Master* and *Justice*. Among the tracks are an acoustic ballad that becomes crushingly heavy like its forebears "Fade to Black" and "One," and an instrumental in the vein of "The Call of Ktulu," "Orion" and "To Live Is to Die."

As for the album's lyrics, Hetfield reclaimed the task of penning those alone, relishing the opportunity to confront his demons one on one again after the group-writing free-for-alls that dominated the *St. Anger* sessions. "I really wanted to crawl back into 'the cave' and kind of get scared—just dark and scared," Hetfield explains after the Basement show, when we sit down in one of the band's tour buses. The towering frontman is still juiced from the performance, shifting restlessly in his seat as his eyes scan his surroundings. He's just finished vocal warm-downs, in particular, an exercise he calls "Horse Lips." He demonstrates it, his mouth flapping as he exhales a breath. "It's funny now that I go in the cave and I'm okay. I know where the exit is."

Hetfield exited this time with a batch of songs exploring, in various ways, his band's brush with mortality and its resulting new life. "A lot of the album revolves around the near-death experience we had—you know, the near-death of Metallica," he says. "I read an interview with Johnny Cash about his near-death experience where he actually saw the light and the tunnel and all kinds of stuff you see in the movies. He was telling it like it is—I don't think Johnny Cash would lie—and he came back and said how grateful he was and how amazing life had become. He was able to really breathe it in and to see people and to feel things deeper than he had ever felt. I found that really intriguing and somehow identified with it because of the band's almost break-up."

Hetfield's lyrics were influenced as well by "some of the people that hadn't come back from the light. There's a lot of rock martyrs or heavy-metal warriors that have died, that didn't make it because they couldn't handle it. You know, like a Layne Staley [*the Alice in Chains frontman who died from a heroin and cocaine overdose in 2002*]. All of the people that have fallen into the mist of the road and relied too much on the crutches."

As most Metallica fans know, Hetfield relied excessively on one of those crutches—alcohol—not so long ago. Even those who didn't know would understand, just listening to him talk, that the subject is very personal. More than any single member in Metallica, maybe more than the band itself, Hetfield stands reborn.

"James was a little bit fragile when I first joined the band, almost five years ago," recalls Trujillo. At the time, Hetfield was fresh out of rehab. "It seemed to me like sometimes you're walking a tightrope with him, or [*walking on*] thin ice. It seems like now he's kind of got his Juju back. He's sober, and that's a beautiful thing for him. He's solid with his family, and it's amazing to see. He just seems more free spirited and really psyched and excited about writing the songs, and really focused on his riffage and his lyrics. He's not afraid to stay in the studio until one in the morning and play guitar and get things right."

Hetfield knows sobriety has probably saved his life, but he's unsure if it's made "getting things right" easier or harder. "It's made me stronger, I think, in that I don't have to rely on an outside source or something—I can go into the cave. It helps when I'm at home or I'm somewhere where no one's around. I used to create the cave by drinking, and I don't need to do that.

"But there are certainly plenty of times where I think it would be so much easier if I was just not me; or if I drank and became some other thing, I'd be freer. Then I think it through, and I realize I don't want to be something else or someone else; I want to be me. Or at least the 'me' I think I know. Why pretend otherwise when I'm trying to connect with people? It's not cool connecting with someone because they think you're someone else.

"So I go back and forth with that, you know: I'm less creative; I'm more creative. It's greater; it's not so great. But more and more, I'm trusting the ability to be creative without cloudiness."

For roughly 15 years, Metallica had worked with Bob Rock, a producer who, by Hetfield's admission, had essentially "become part of the band." For *Death Magnetic*, the band changed its tack and brought in the legendary Rick Rubin, whose credits include Slayer's *Reign in Blood*, Danzig's *Danzig*, Slipknot's *Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses)* and System of a Down's *Toxicity*, to shake things up. Even so, Lars Ulrich says that Rubin when laid down his *Death Magnetic* mission statement—"Go back to what you were thinking in *Master of Puppets*"—there was "some fear and some trepidation about going back and taking a look at what we used to do."

"On the *Justice* tour in '89—I can't remember what show it was—we're playing these fucking songs," Ulrich recalls. "They're 10 minutes long—it's one math-metal exercise after another—and we've gone back to the dressing room. And we all sat and looked at each other and were just like, 'What the fuck is this? Why are we putting ourselves through this stuff?' Basically, the whole thing becomes about not fucking up. I mean, we go out on-stage every night with one goal in mind, which is to not fuck up." There, in the dressing room, Ulrich says, "We made a promise to each other that we were gonna go in a completely different direction and we were just gonna get away from that. That's been, you know, 16 years where we did everything to not go back there."

Rubin's directive may have been unsettling, but once the band members overcame their initial reservations to it, they were able to embrace the experiment. As Hammett explains, Metallica had to learn to "not be afraid to look into our past and take out the best elements of our past and use them, because we own them. We invented that shit." During the making of *Death Magnetic*, he says, "There was a lot of self-referencing going on all across the board: in the songwriting, in the performance, in the recording, in the attitude, in the problem solving. A lot of times we would say, 'What would we do in the Eighties?' and we were able to mine our own material for fresh new ideas."

Ulrich adds that, while Metallica were inspired by their past records, they were careful not to cast the new material in the vein of, "no disrespect, but classic rock." Trujillo agrees they succeeded in that goal. "Yes, there's elements of the speed, of the riff, of the heaviness of that old-school stuff, but there's definitely at times a bounce and a groove thing going on, too, that represents what is happening, like, now."

> "WE HAD TO TAKE THE BEST ELEMENTS OF OUR PAST AND USE THEM, BECAUSE WE OWN THEM. WE INVENTED THAT SHIT."
>
> —KIRK HAMMETT

Metallica are still digesting their experience working with Rubin. "The thing that I really like about Rick is he's the most blunt person you'll ever meet," Ulrich says. "When it comes to music, it's really simple: Either he likes it or it's fucking shit. And I kind of like the bluntness of it. I mean, sometimes, it's a little crazy. I was sitting one day listening to some drum tracks and played one version for him. And he goes, 'That's so bad it makes me want to kill myself. Literally. I hope I never hear that again. That's depressingly bad.' Okay. So, I play him the other version, and it's the same thing he just heard except it has, like, two different drum fills. Other than that, they're identical, all right? I play him the second version. 'That's fucking on fire! That's great!' And you're just kind of sitting there going, Huh?

"A couple of times we had to take the reins," Ulrich adds, " and it feels good to do that. It feels like we can always rely on that when we really need to. Me and Hetfield can step up and kind of, 'Don't fuck with Metallica,' because at the end of the day, that's us."

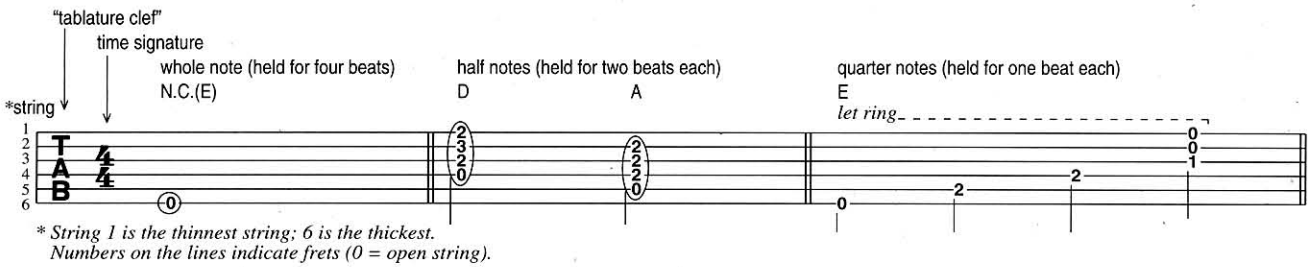
And if ever Metallica's identity—and very existence—was in doubt, now it seems crystal clear. As Ulrich says, Metallica "is us," not just a band but a family that has been through some dysfunctional times but is now tighter and stronger than it has been in many years. The drummer's taunt before the Basement show seems to confirm this in itself—"You guys suck" likely wouldn't have been so funny back in the *Some Kind of Monster* days, and it probably would have started a fight.

"You know, it's awesome, the fact that after 27 years we can get along," Ulrich says, "that we can fucking sit in the same dressing room. We still use the same dressing room—take showers within minutes of each other. I mean, think about it a second, the horror stories you hear of other bands who can't even be in the same city at the same time. We actually go and have dinner together. We actually hang out. We sit down and talk to each other. It's pretty cool...

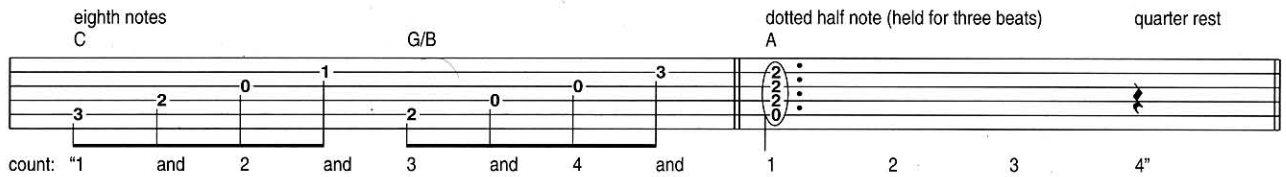
"But don't spend too much time on the shower thing," he says, backpedaling suddenly. "I could see where you're going with it: 'Fucking James and Lars in the shower. I knew they were fucking gay all along.' " He laughs. "But it's a rare thing. We really do appreciate it, and that's not some next-level psychobabble, found-God type of thing."

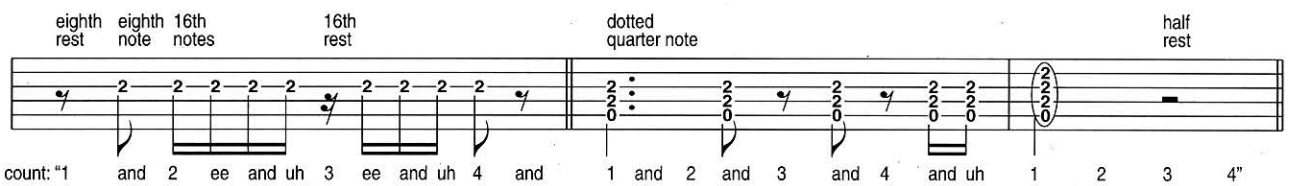
Having pulled through, the Metallica family can now shift its attention to enjoying their extended family: the fans. And down in the Basement, even as the band absolutely tears up the tiny space, a familial vibe prevails. Between songs, the bandmates joke around with each other and the crowd, distributing high fives and bottles of water. Hetfield calls out Ron from New York, who he recognizes from the front row, dead center, of the last 100-plus Metallica shows. And maybe the intimate family feeling here is not so surprising; these are, after all, 150 or so of Metallica's most diehard fans, and this is the Basement.

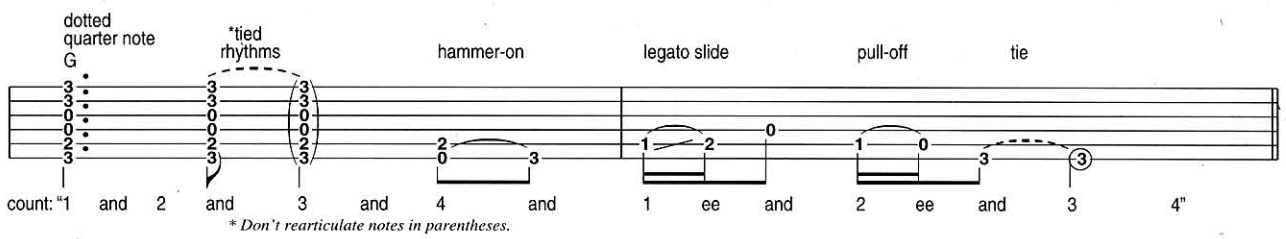
Surprisingly, that vibe somehow carries over to Metallica's gig the next day when they headline the mainstage of the Bonnaroo Music Festival in nearby Manchester, Tennessee, in front of some 80,000 people. Once a hippie fest dominated by jam bands, the 2008 installment features not only Metallica but also Pearl Jam, Mastodon, the Sword, rapper Kanye West, the all-female tribute band Lez Zeppelin and, possibly Metallica's most unlikely opening act ever, comedian Chris Rock. When a few songs in, Hetfield asks the crowd how many people have never seen Metallica before, it seems as if almost all 80,000 raise their hands (except, of course, Ron from New York, who we spot on the ginormous stage-side monitors, front row, dead center, locked down on the barrier). Apparently, even the biggest metal band in the world has more fans to adopt into their family. At the end of their final encore song, "Seek and Destroy," Hetfield tells the crowd, "Metallica loves you, baby. Metallica loves you," and it's pretty clear that the feeling is mutual. GT



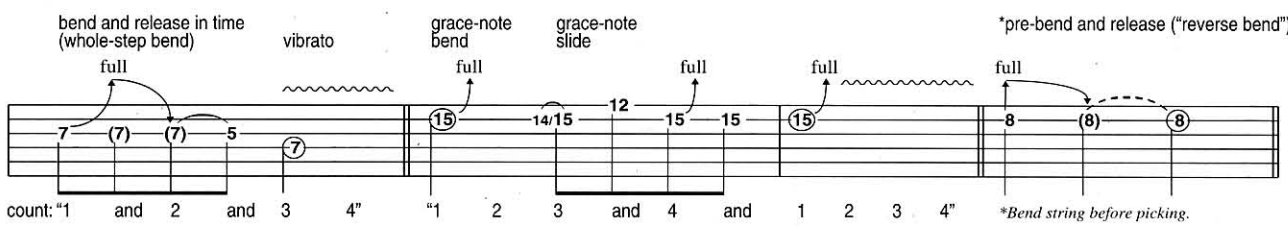
* *String 1 is the thinnest string; 6 is the thickest. Numbers on the lines indicate frets (0 = open string).*



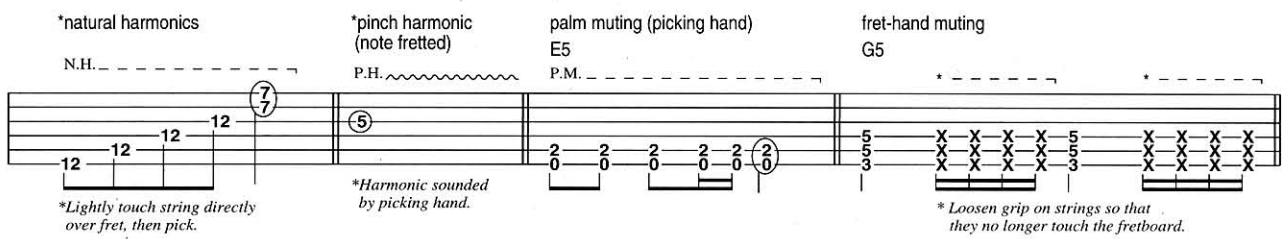




* *Don't rearticulate notes in parentheses.*



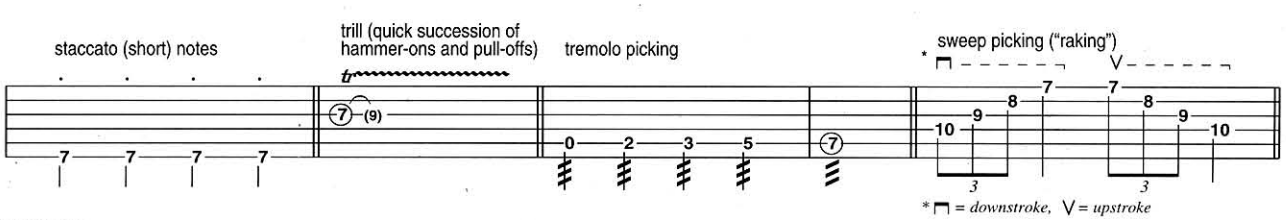
* *Bend string before picking.*



* *Lightly touch string directly over fret, then pick.*

* *Harmonic sounded by picking hand.*

* *Loosen grip on strings so that they no longer touch the fretboard.*



* ⊓ = *downstroke*, ∨ = *upstroke*

"ENTER SANDMAN"

As heard on **METALLICA** (ELEKTRA)

Words and Music by **James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich and Kirk Hammett** ★ *Transcribed by* **Andy Aledort**

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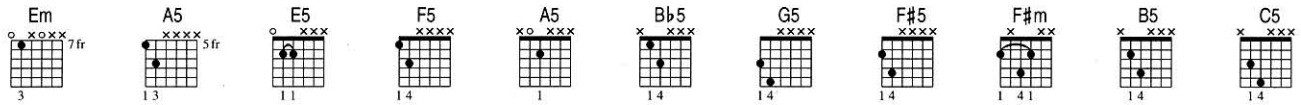
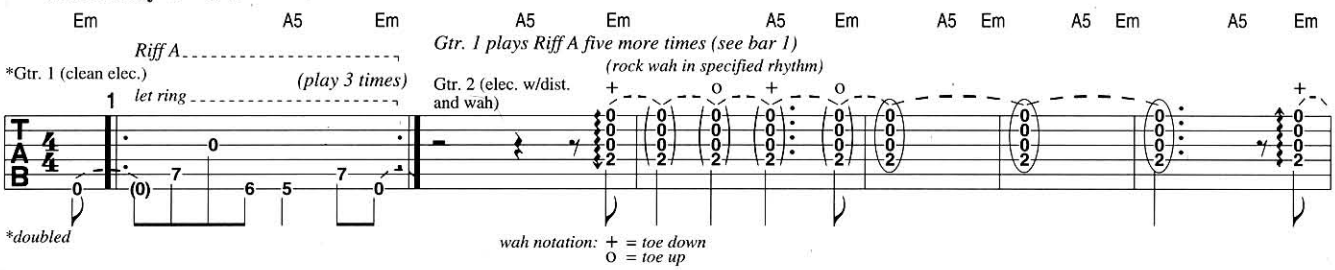
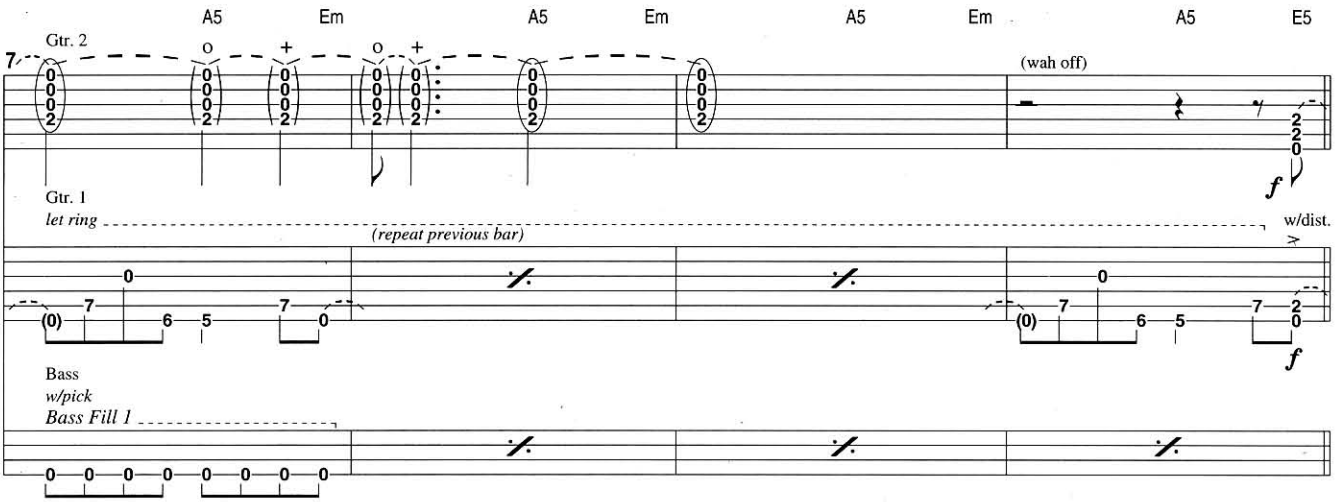
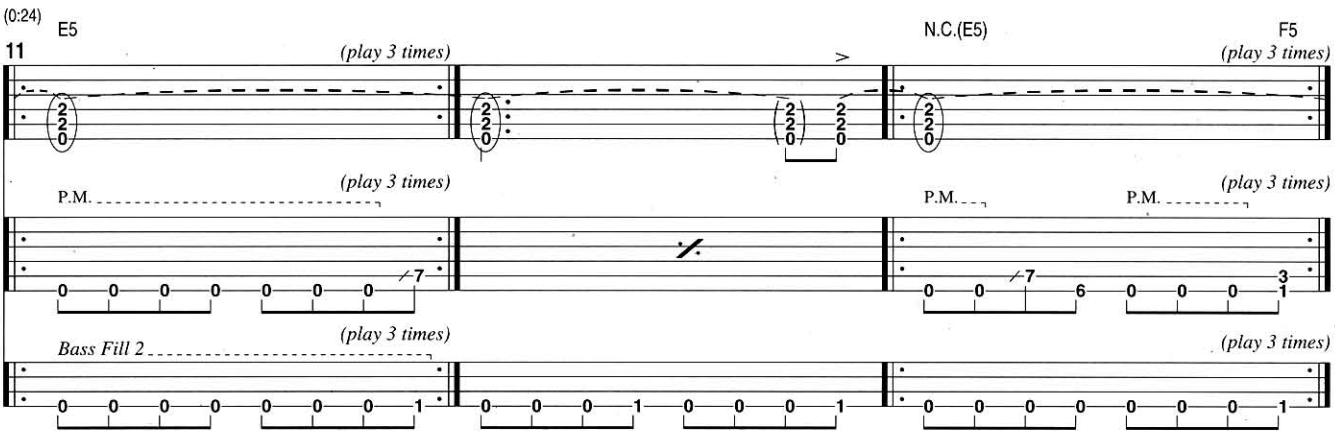


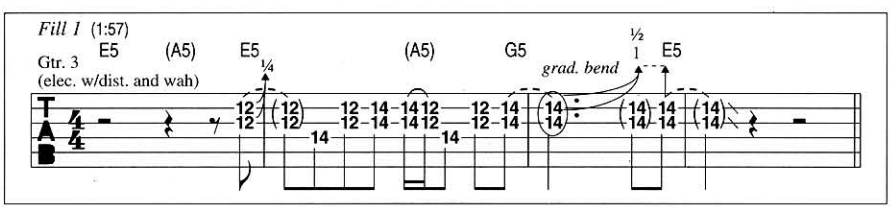
A Intro (0:00)

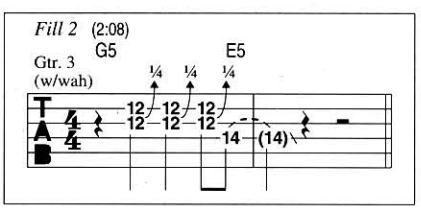
Moderately ♩ = 120











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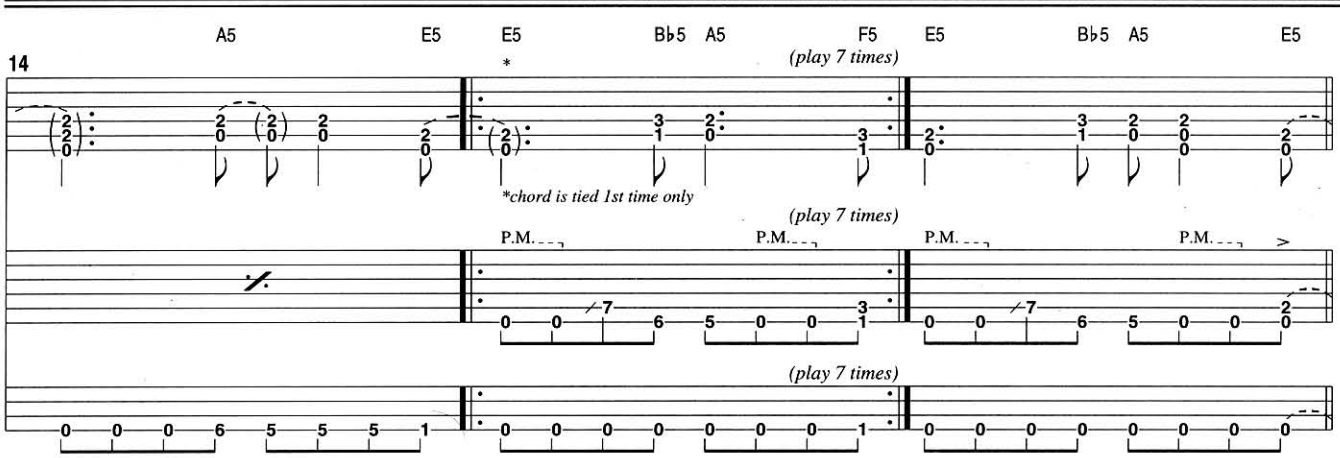
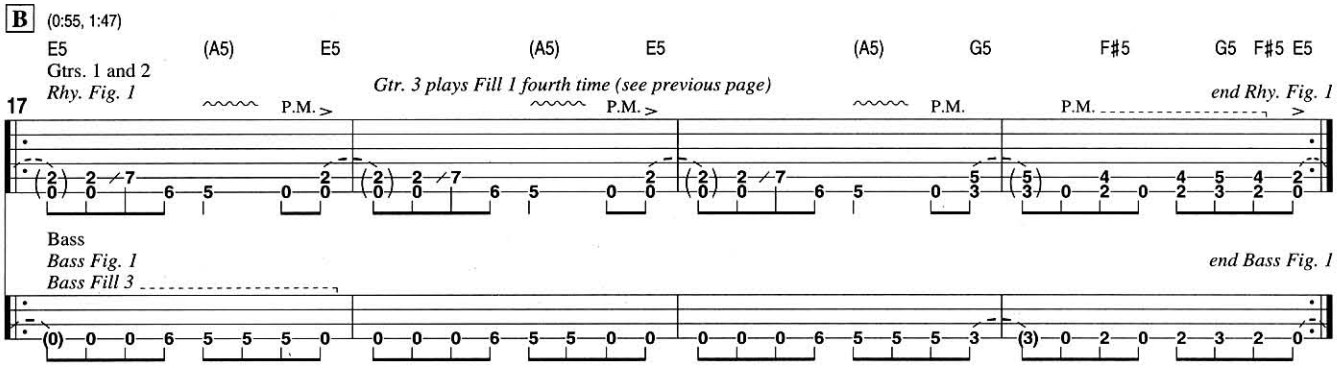
"ENTER SANDMAN"

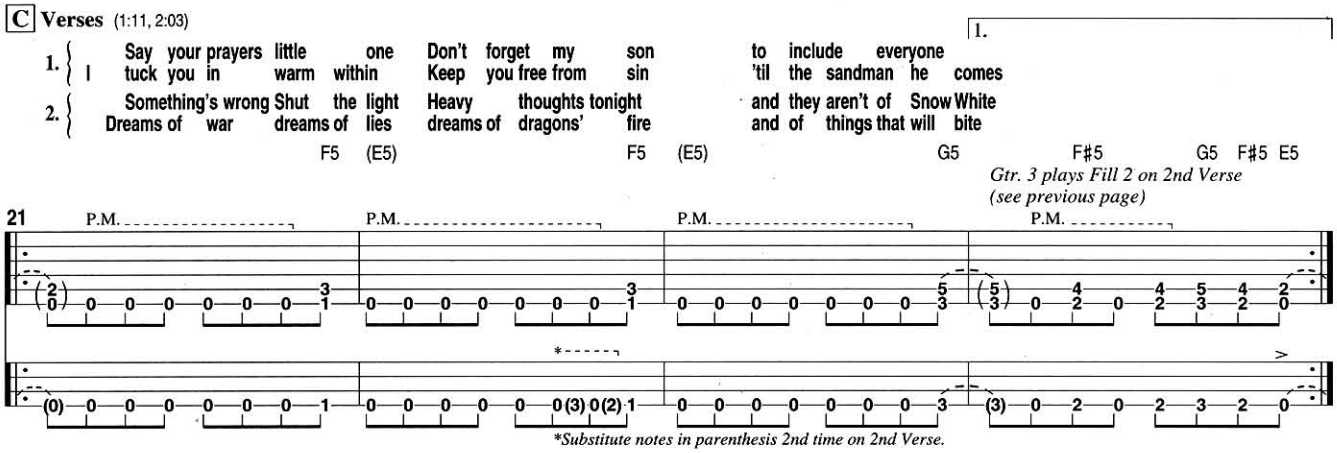


B (0:55, 1:47)



C **Verses** (1:11, 2:03)

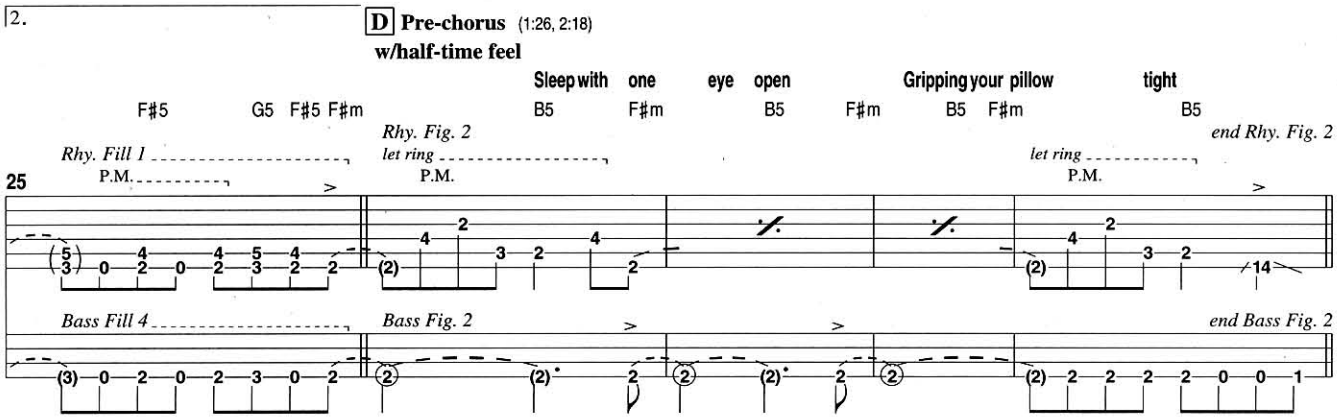
1. I Say your prayers little one Don't forget my son to include everyone
   tuck you in warm within Keep you free from sin 'til the sandman he comes
2. Something's wrong Shut the light Heavy thoughts tonight and they aren't of Snow White
   Dreams of war dreams of lies dreams of dragons' fire and of things that will bite



2.

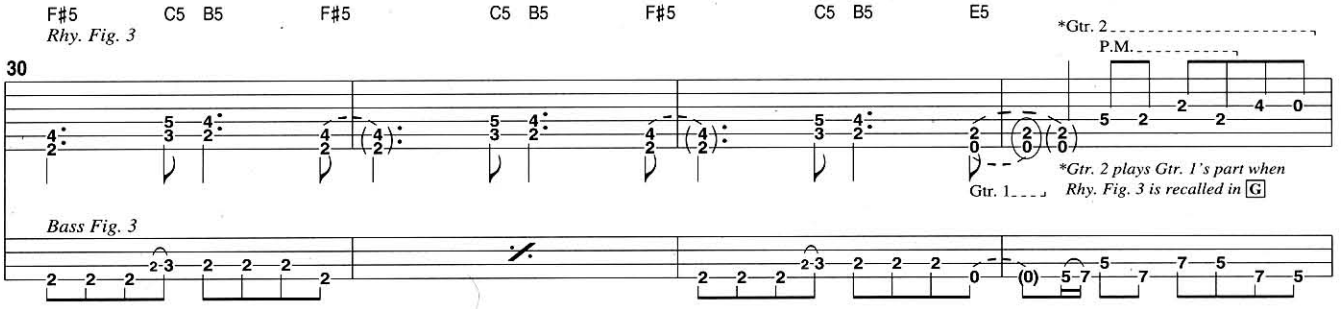
D **Pre-chorus** (1:26, 2:18)
w/half-time feel

Sleep with one eye open Gripping your pillow tight



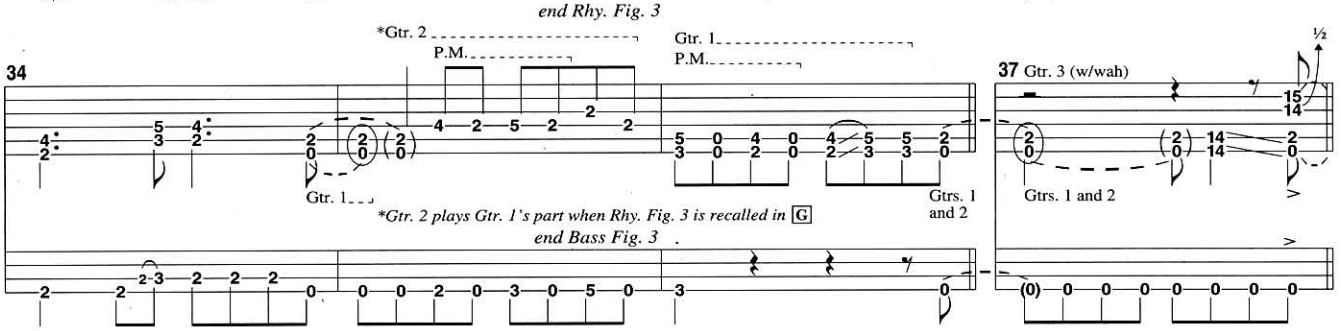
E **1st and 2nd Choruses** (1:34, 2:26)
(end half-time feel)

Exit light Enter night
F♯5 C5 B5 F♯5 C5 B5 F♯5 C5 B5 E5
Rhy. Fig. 3

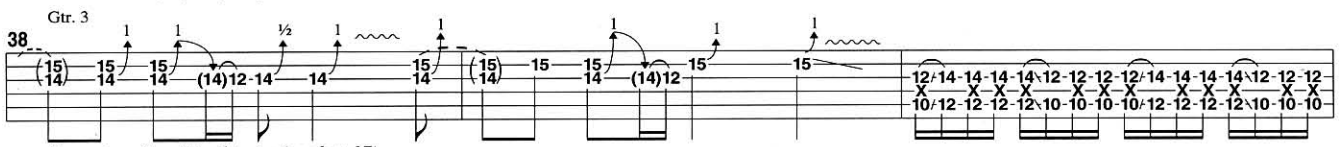


1st time, go back to **B** **F** (2:39)
2nd time, move on to **F**

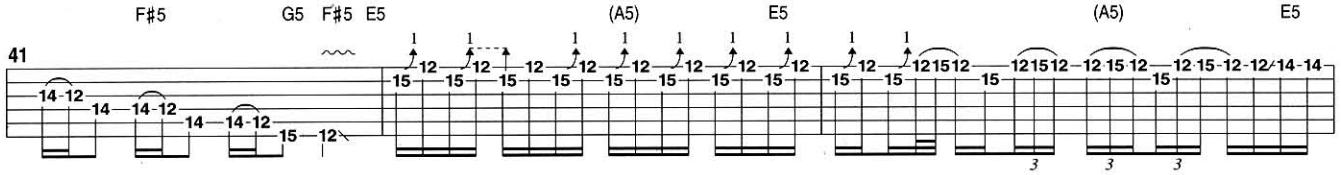
Take my hand We're off to never neverland
F♯5 C5 B5 E5 G5 F♯5 G5 E5 (E5)
end Rhy. Fig. 3



G **Guitar Solo** (2:41)
E5 (A5) E5 (A5) E5 (A5) G5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 17)

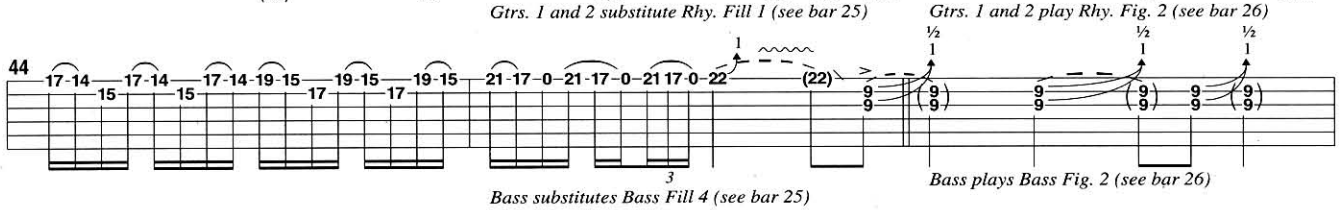


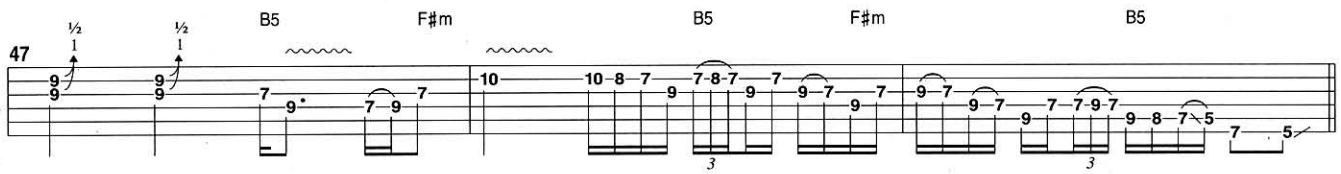
F♯5 G5 F♯5 E5 (A5) E5 (A5) E5

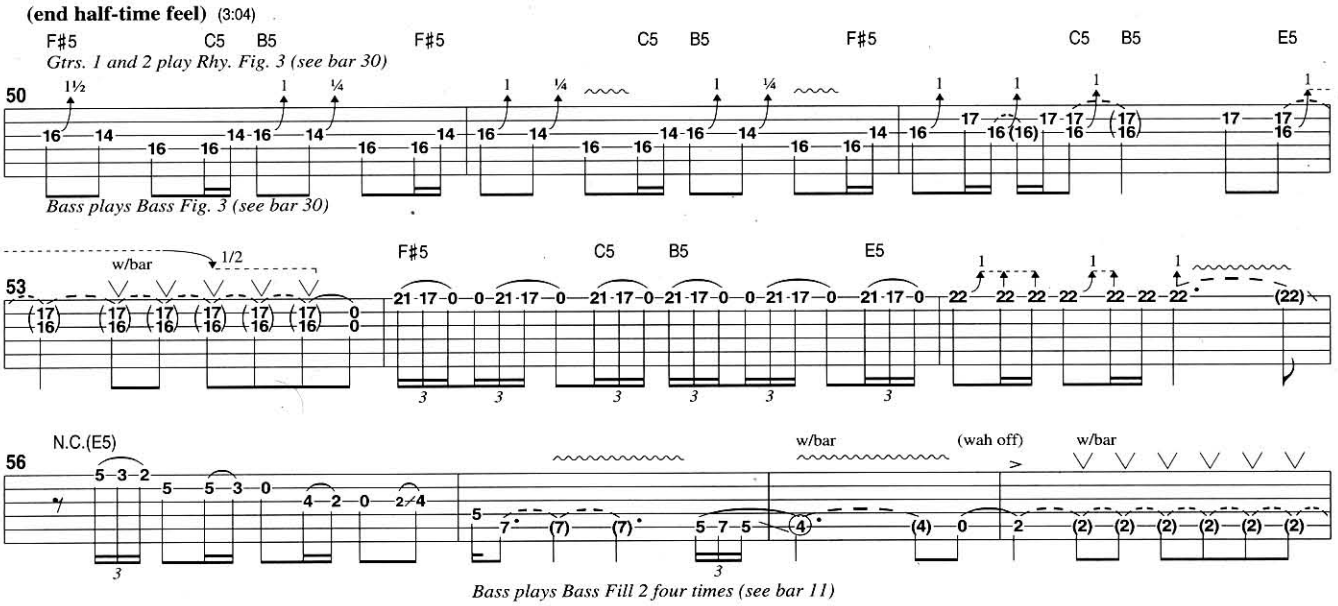


w/half-time feel (2:57)

(A5) G5 F♯5 G♯5 F♯5 F♯m B5 F♯m
Gtrs. 1 and 2 substitute Rhy. Fill 1 (see bar 25)
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 26)

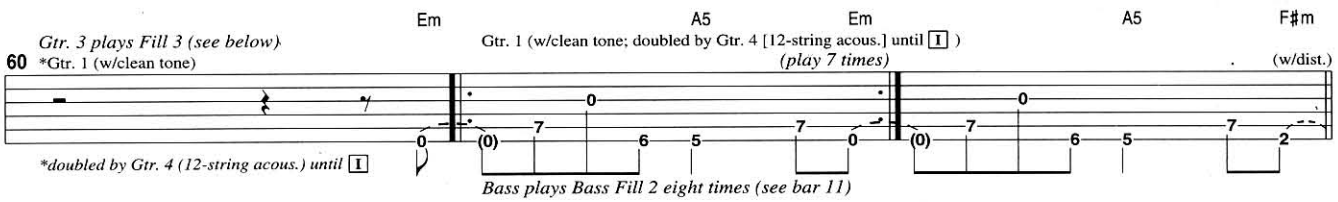




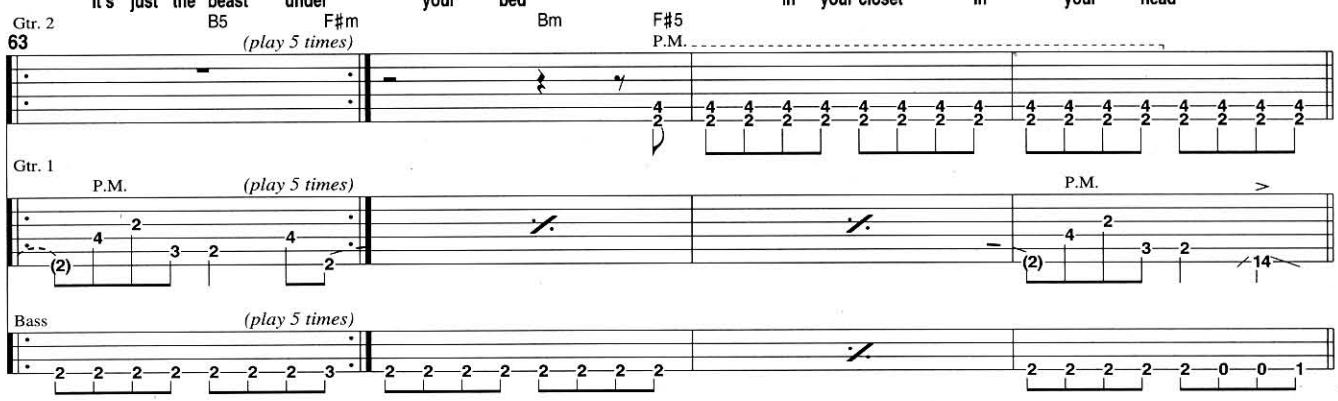


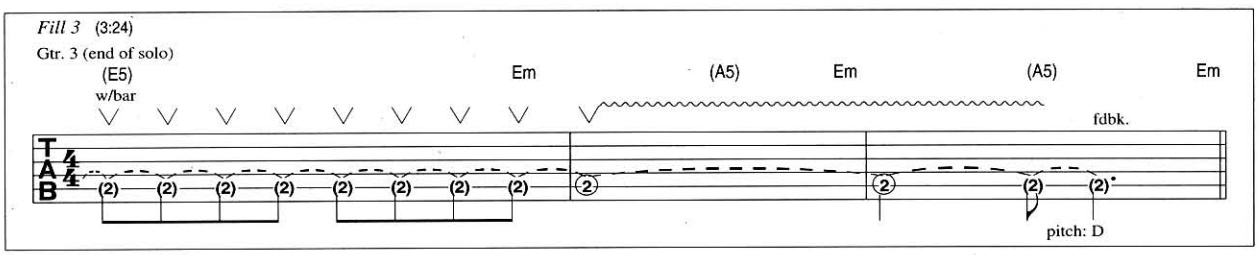
H Interlude (3:26)

Now I lay me down to sleep (2x)
Pray the Lord my soul to keep (2x)
If I die before I wake (2x)
Pray the Lord my soul to take (2x)



Hush little baby don't say a word and never mind that noise you heard
It's just the beast under your bed in your closet in your head





I **3rd Chorus** (3:57)

Exit light Enter night

F♯5 C5 B5 F♯5 C5 B5 F♯5 C5 B5 E5

67 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Gtr. 2

P.M.

Gtr. 1

Bass

1. Grain of sand

2. Take my hand We're

F♯5 C5 B5 E5 F♯5 C5 B5 E5

71

Gtr. 2

P.M.

Gtr. 1

J **Outro** (4:24)

off to never neverland yeah heh heh heh heh ha ha Boo

G5 F♯5 G5 E5 (A5) E5 (A5) E5

75 Gtr. 2

Gtr. 1

P.M.

Bass

(2nd time) Yeah (1st time) yeah Yo whoa

(A5) E5 (A5) E5 (A5) G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5 E5

79 Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fill 3 twice (see bar 17) *Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 17)*

(4:39)

(A5) F5 (E5) (A5) F5 (E5) F5 (E5)

play 17 times and fade

Gtrs. 2 (clean) and 4 (12-stg. acous.) play Riff A until fade (see bar 1)

Gtr. 3 plays Fill 3 fifth time (see below)

(play 3 times) *(play 4 times)*

83 Gtr. 1

P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fill 2 eight times (see bar 11)

Bass plays Bass Fill 1 until fade (see bar 7)

Fill 3 (5:03)

(E5)

Gtr. 3 (w/light dist.)

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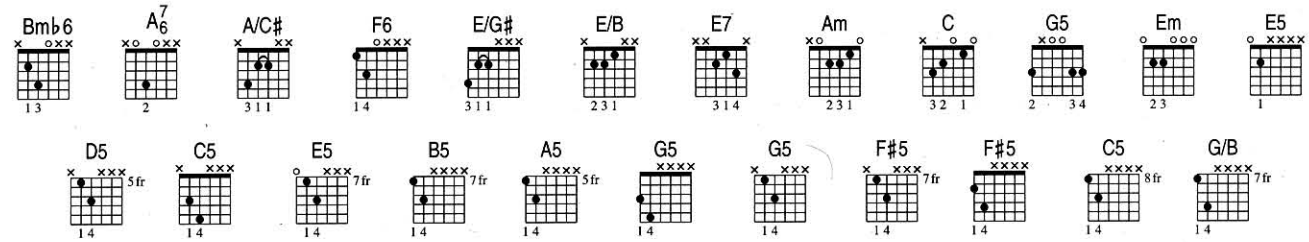
"FADE TO BLACK"

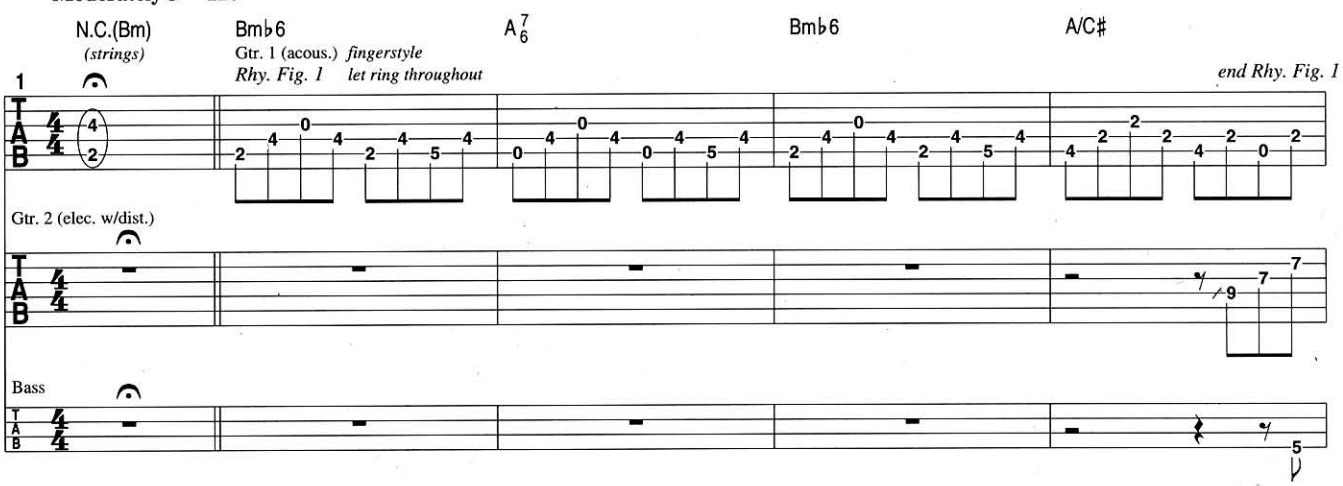
As heard on **RIDE THE LIGHTNING** (ELEKTRA)

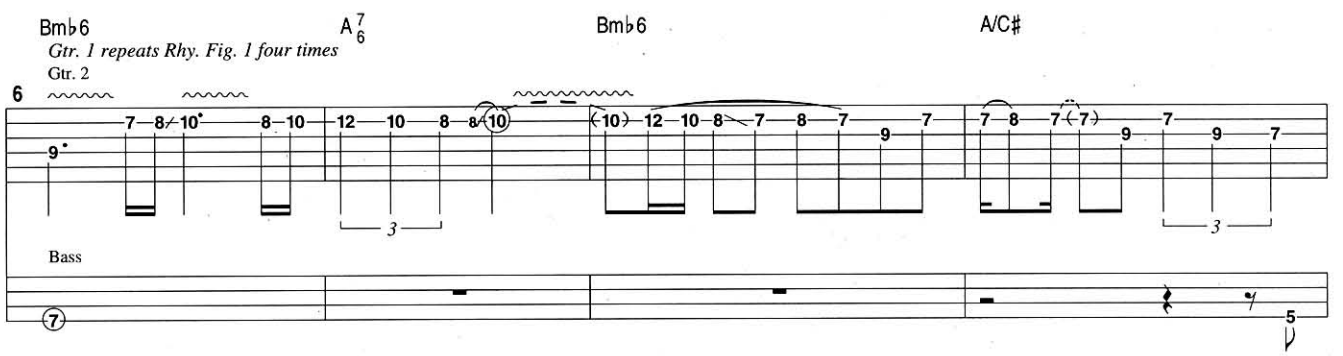
Words and Music by **James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Cliff Burton and Kirk Hammett** ✶ *Transcribed by* **Andy Aledort**

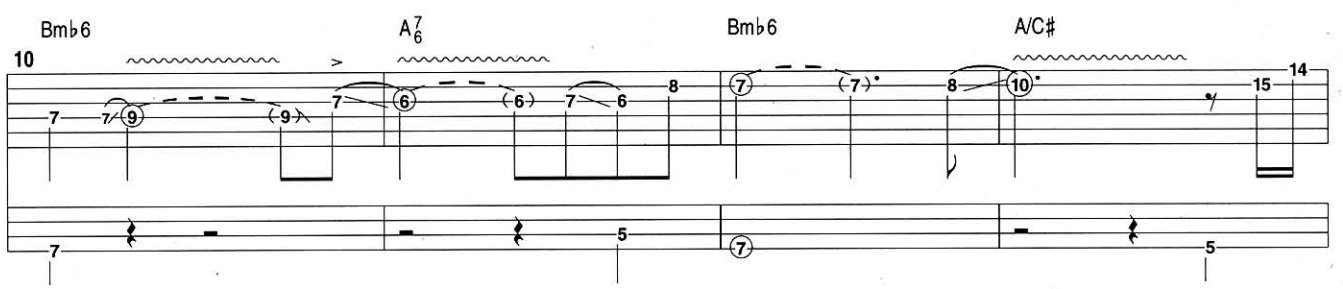


(0:00) **A Intro/1st Theme** (0:08)

Moderately ♩ = 120







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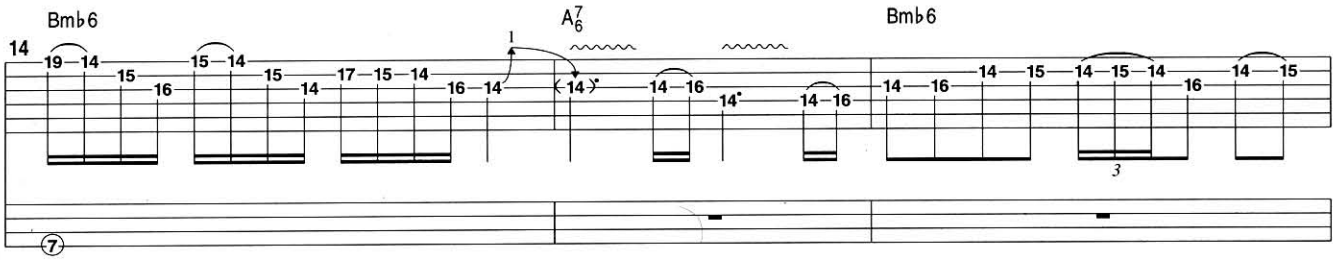
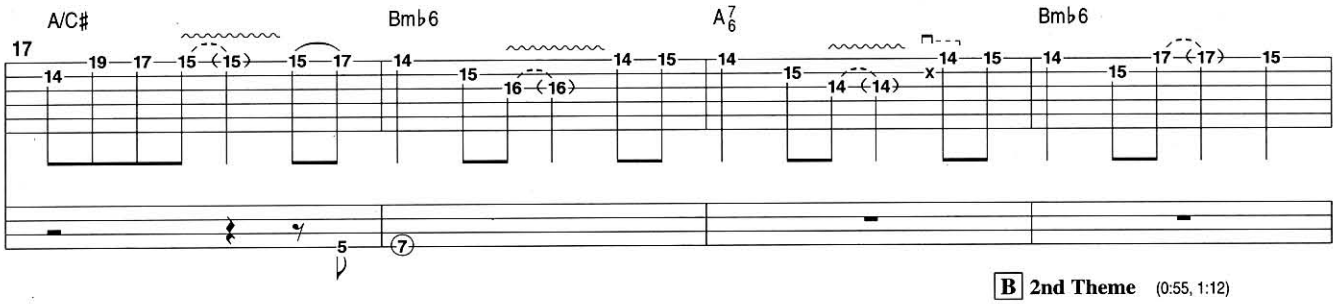
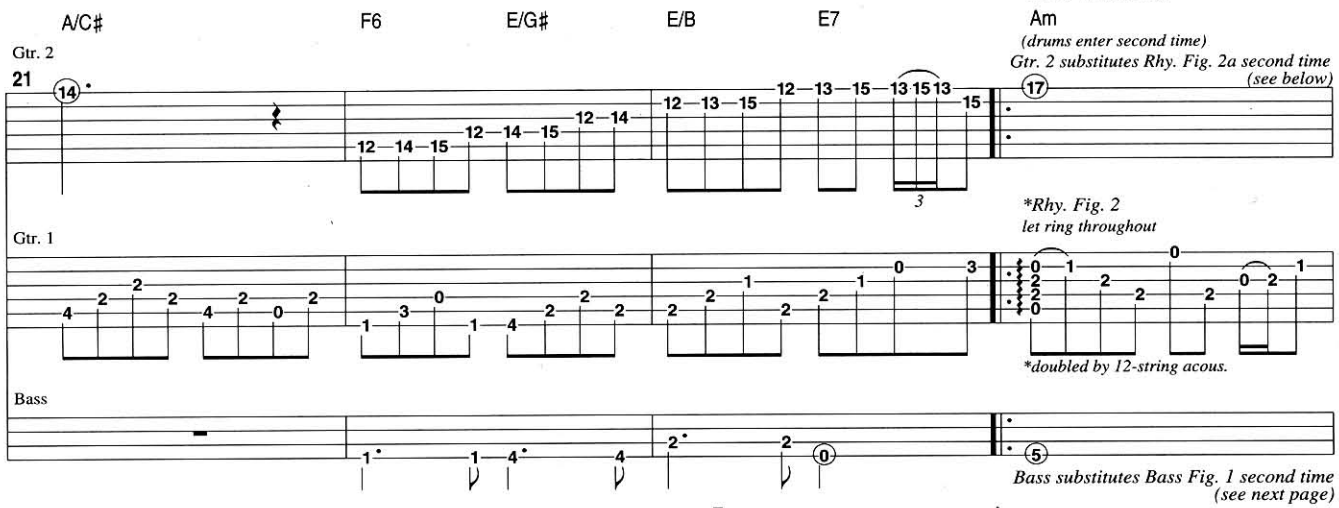
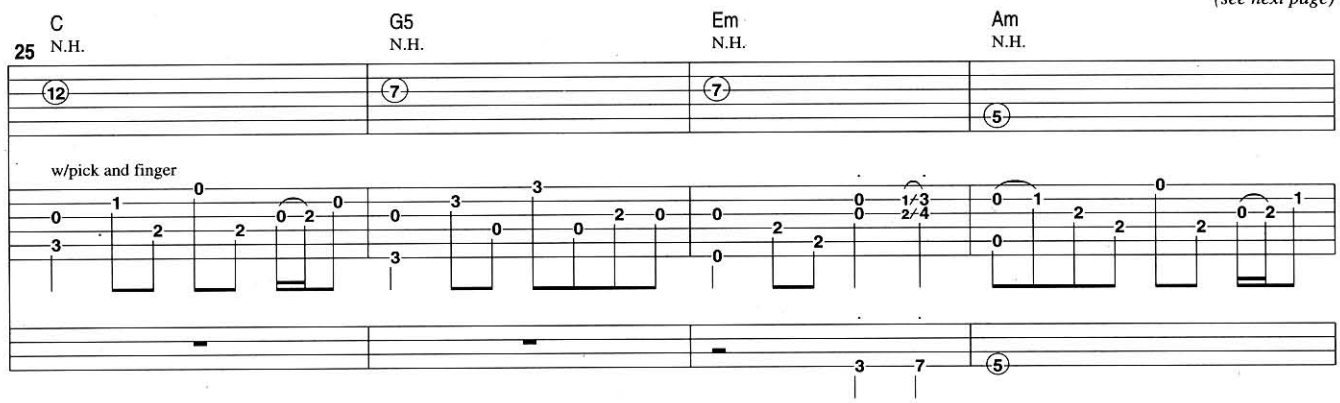


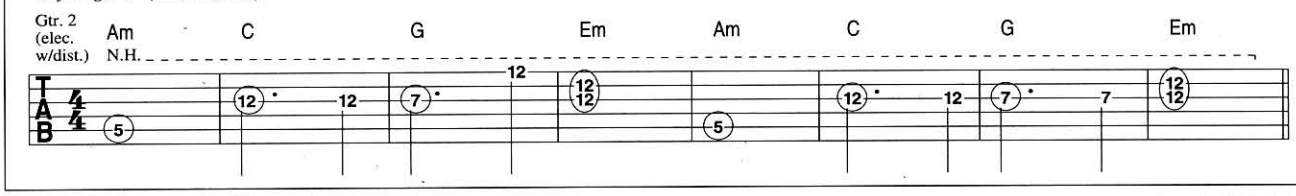


B **2nd Theme** (0:55, 1:12)
Half-time Feel





Rhy. Fig. 2a (1:12, 1:29, 2:52)



C 1st and 2nd Verses (1:29, 2:52)

1. Life it seems will fade
2. Things not what they used

C N.H. G N.H. Em N.H. Am

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a twice (see previous page)

29

end Rhy. Fig. 2

away
to be
Drifting further every day
Missing one inside of me
Getting lost within
Deathly loss this can't

C G Em Am

33 Gtr. 1

Bass

myself
be real
Nothing matters no one else
Cannot stand this hell I feel
I have lost the will
Emptiness is fill-

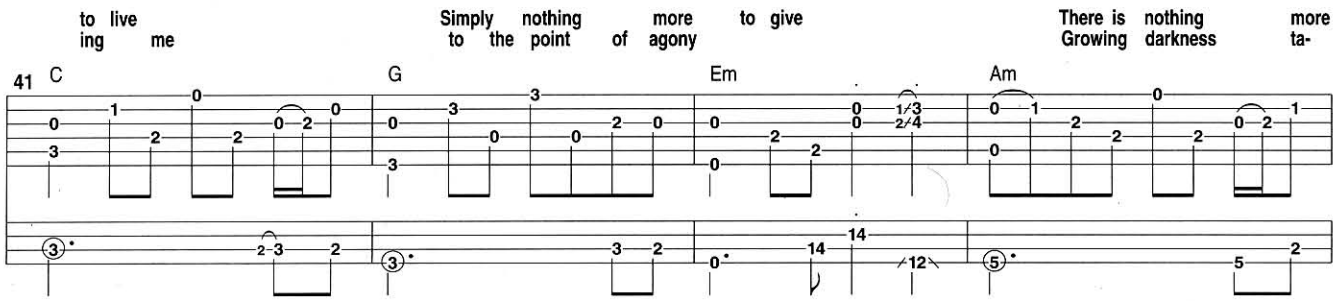
C G Em Am

37

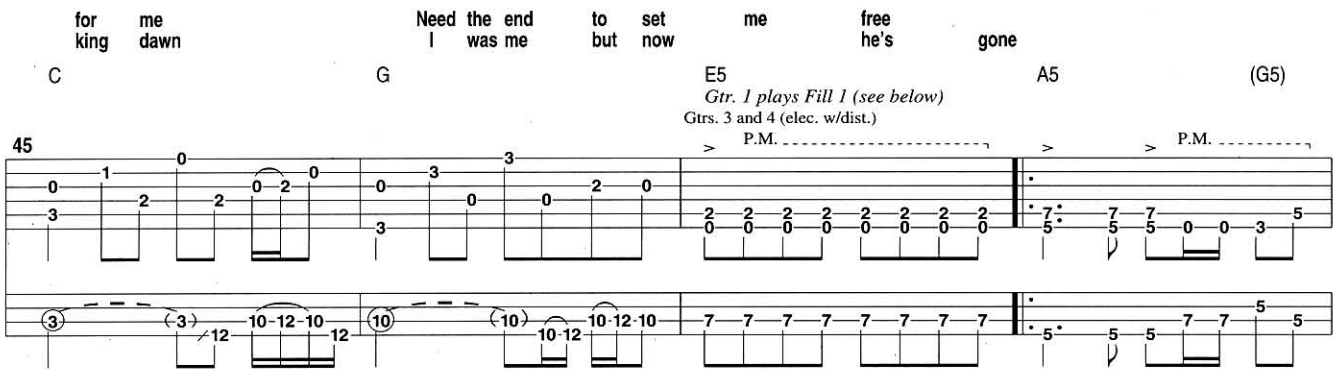
Bass Fig. 1 (1:12)

Bass Am C G Em

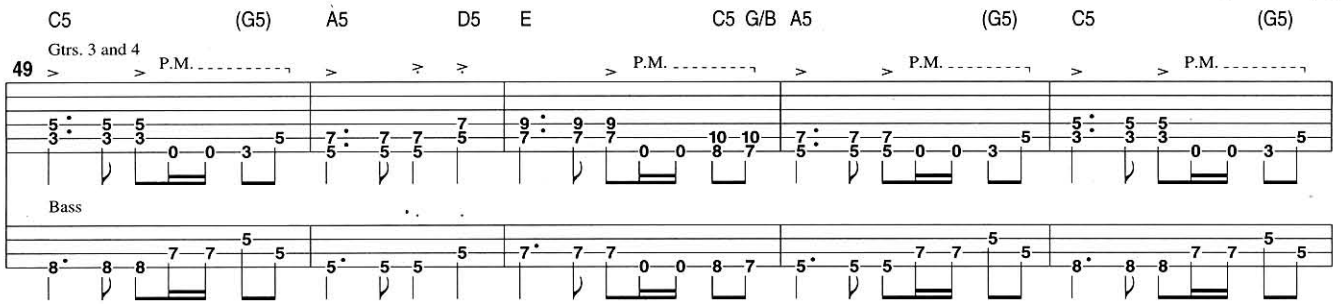
Am C G Em



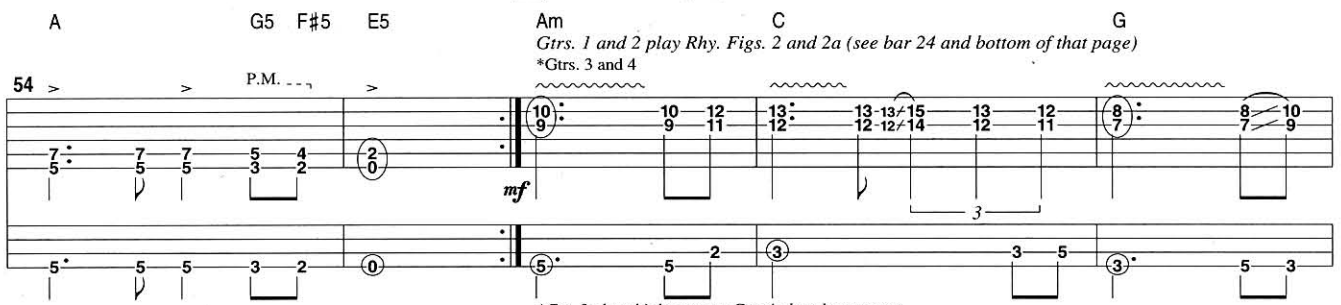
D **Chorus** *(no vocal)* (2:03, 3:25)



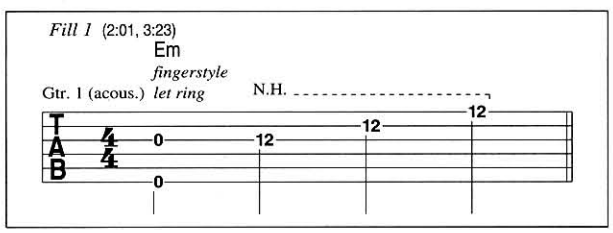
(2nd time on 2nd chorus)
skip ahead to **F**



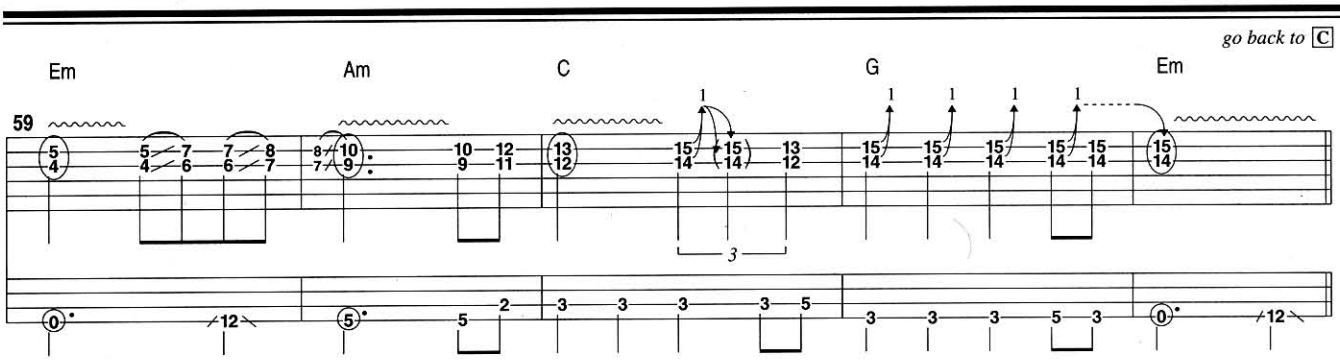
E **1st Interlude** (2:35)

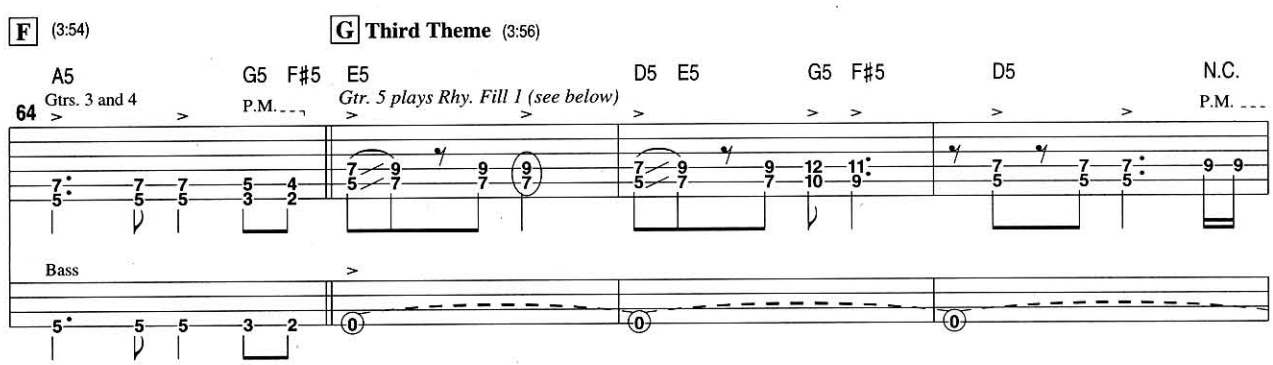


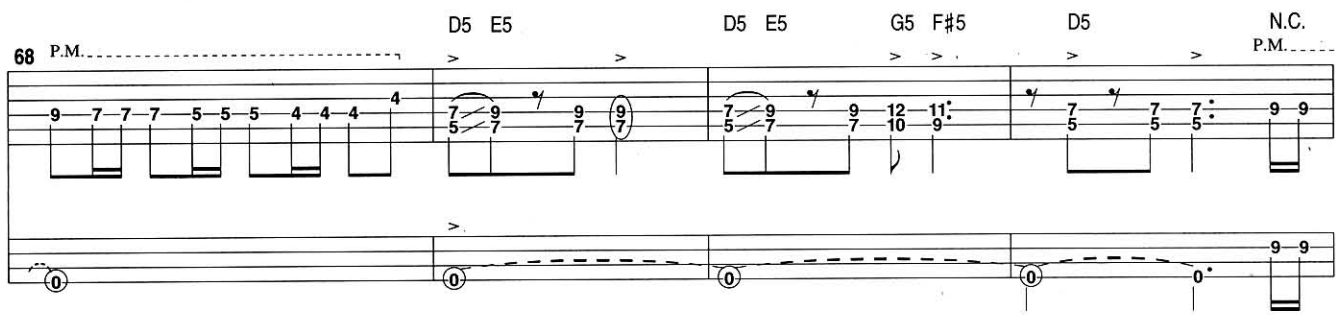
**Gtr. 3 plays higher notes; Gtr. 4 plays lower notes.*

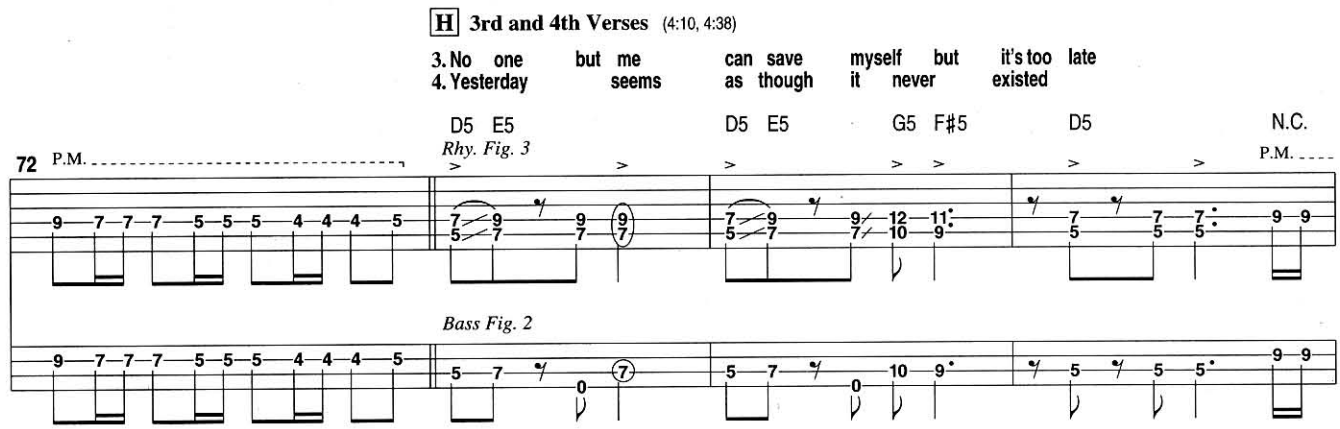


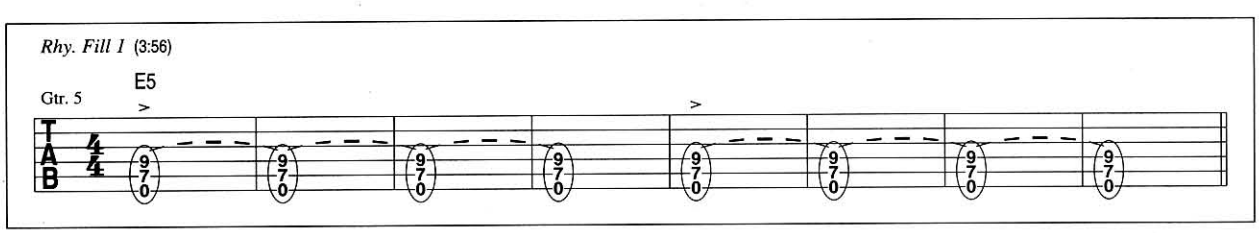
"FADE TO BLACK"

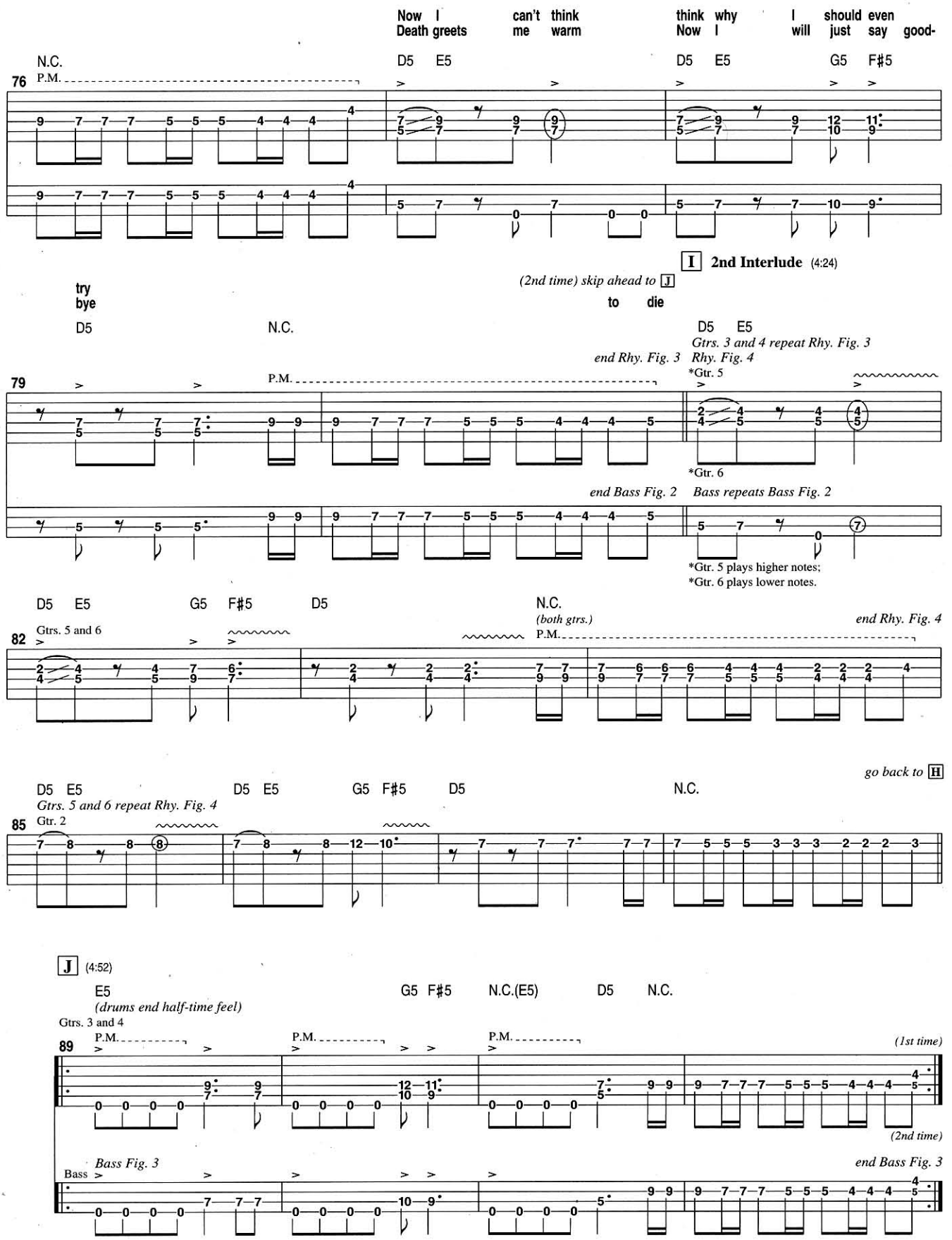


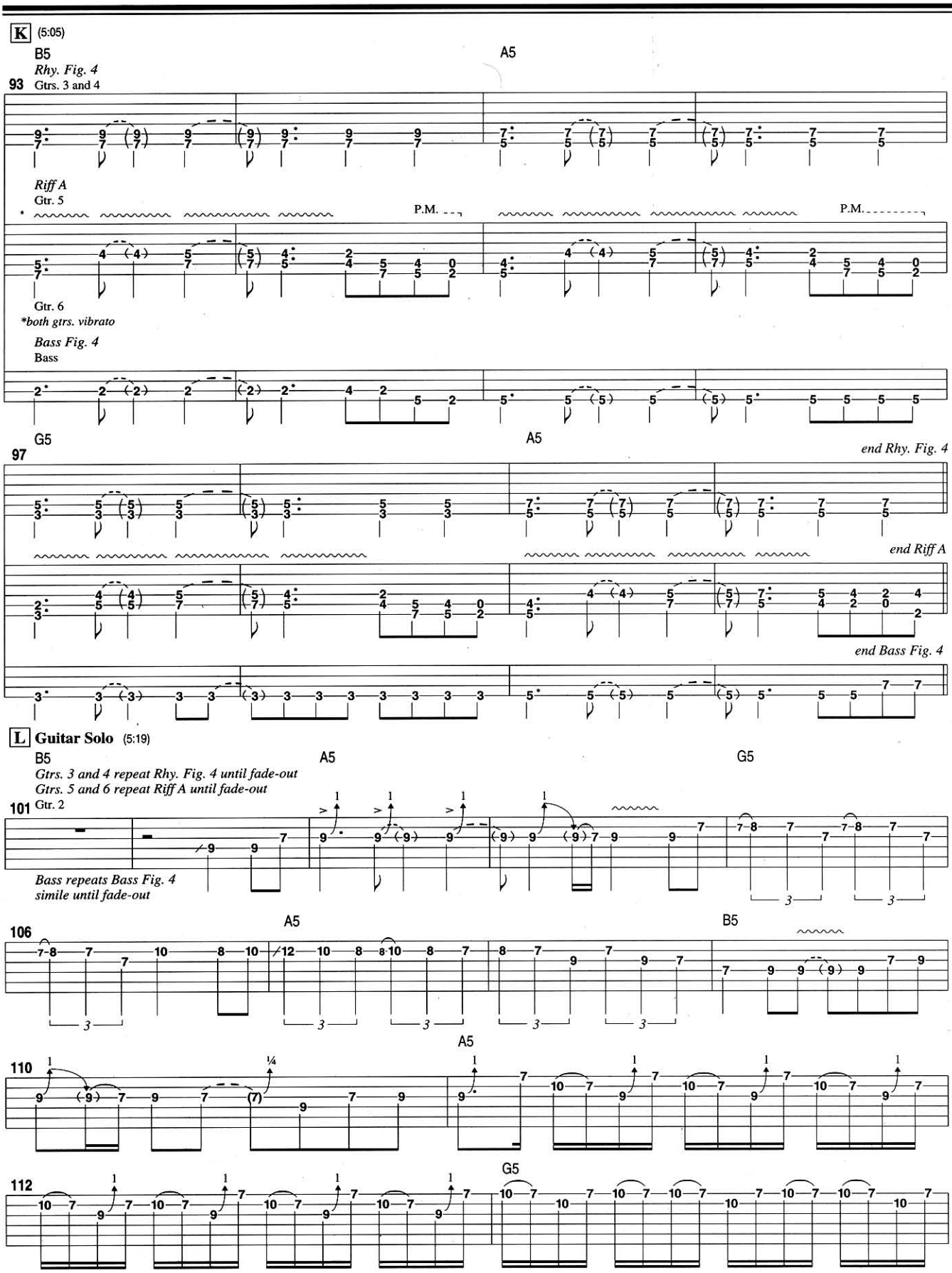


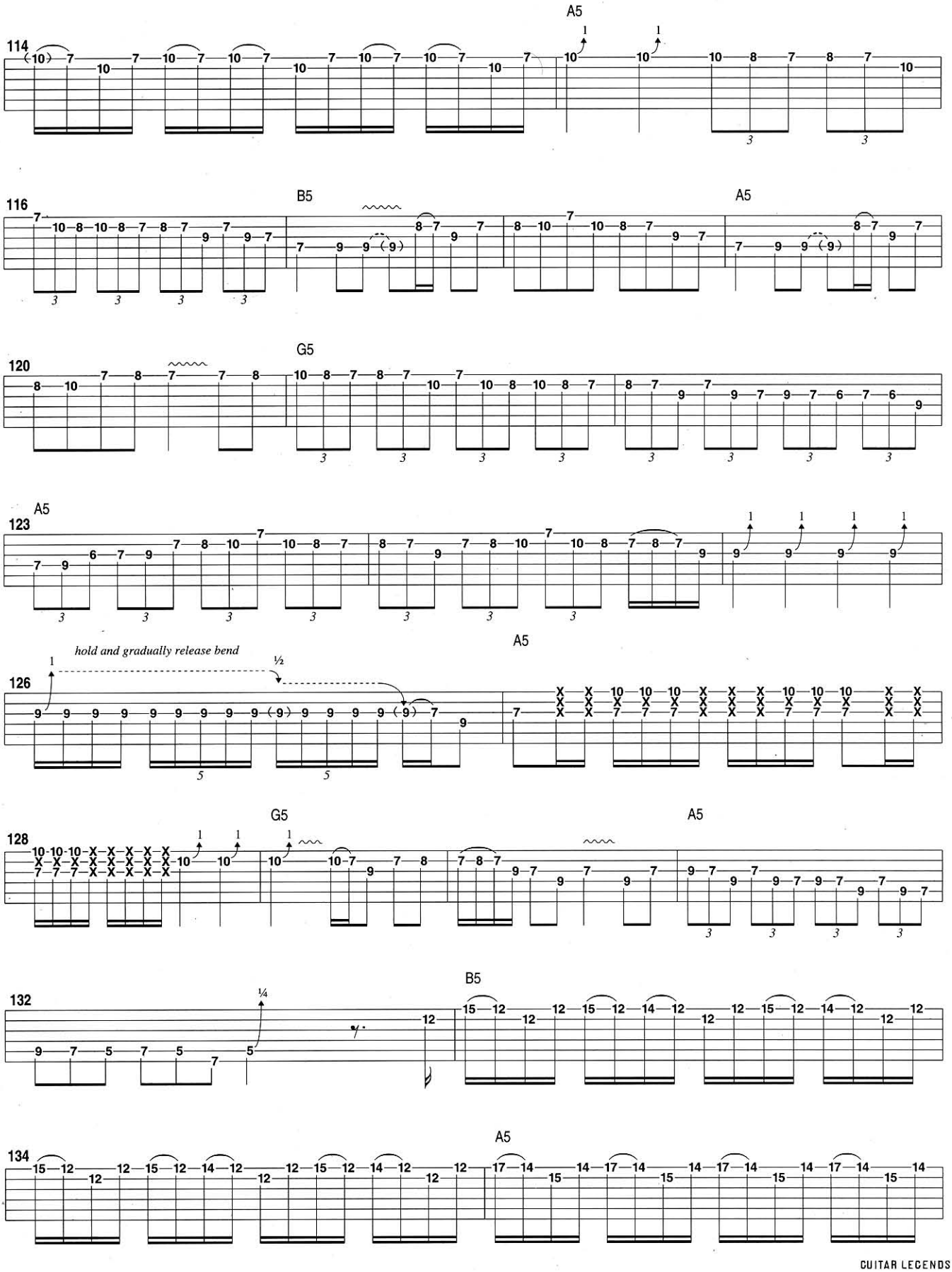




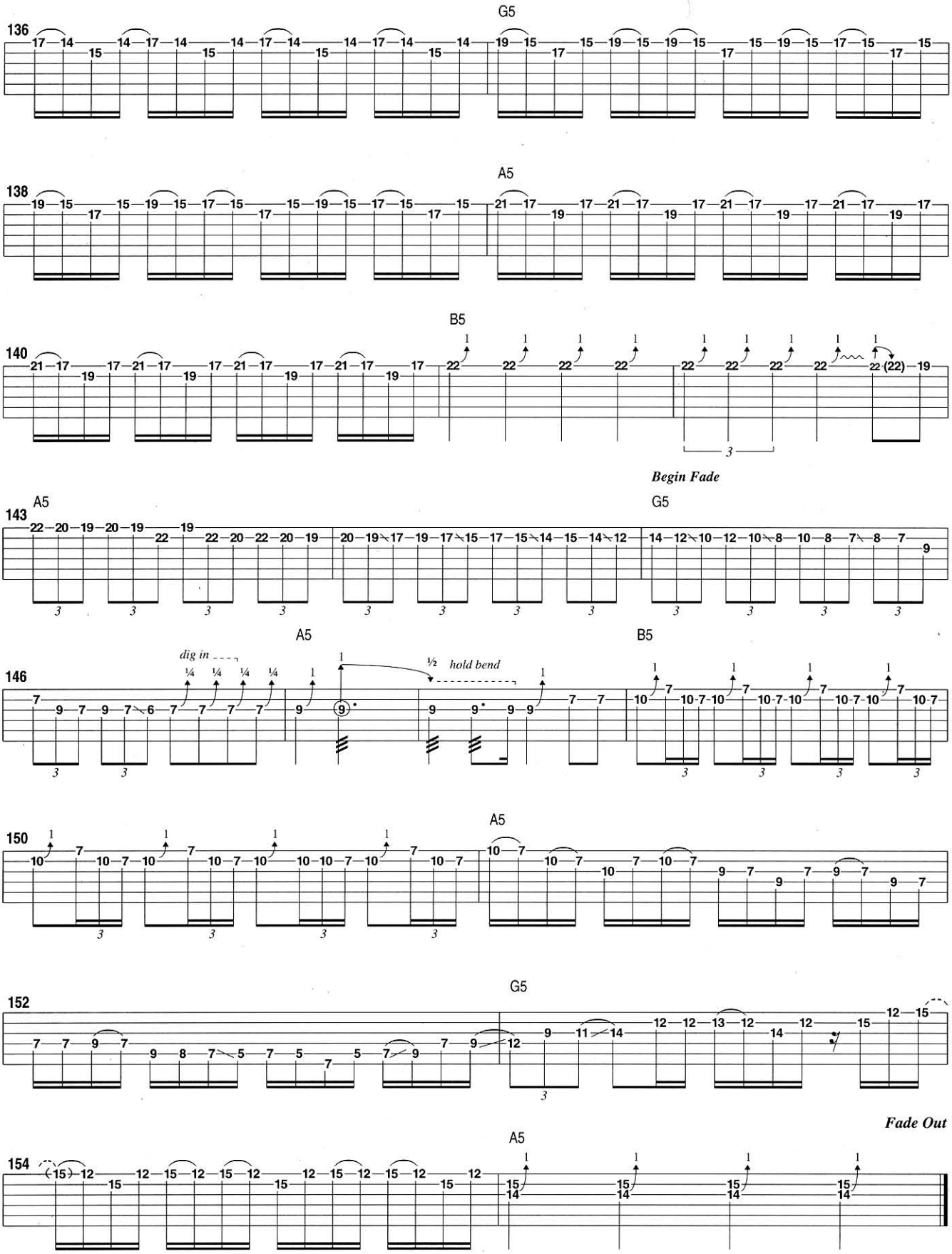



Now I can't think think why I should even
Death greets me warm Now I will just say good-
N.C. D5 E5 D5 E5 G5 F#5
76 P.M.
I 2nd Interlude (4:24)
(2nd time) skip ahead to J
try to die
bye
D5 N.C. D5 E5
Gtrs. 3 and 4 repeat Rhy. Fig. 3
end Rhy. Fig. 3 Rhy. Fig. 4
79 P.M. *Gtr. 5
*Gtr. 6
end Bass Fig. 2 Bass repeats Bass Fig. 2
*Gtr. 5 plays higher notes;
*Gtr. 6 plays lower notes.
D5 E5 G5 F#5 D5 N.C.
Gtrs. 5 and 6 (both gtrs.)
82 P.M. end Rhy. Fig. 4
go back to H
D5 E5 D5 E5 G5 F#5 D5 N.C.
Gtrs. 5 and 6 repeat Rhy. Fig. 4
85 Gtr. 2
J (4:52)
E5 G5 F#5 N.C.(E5) D5 N.C.
(drums end half-time feel)
Gtrs. 3 and 4
89 P.M. (1st time)
(2nd time)
Bass Fig. 3 end Bass Fig. 3
Bass


K (5:05)
B5
A5
Rhy. Fig. 4
93 Gtrs. 3 and 4
Riff A
Gtr. 5
P.M.
P.M.
Gtr. 6
*both gtrs. vibrato
Bass Fig. 4
Bass
G5
A5
97
end Rhy. Fig. 4
end Riff A
end Bass Fig. 4
L Guitar Solo (5:19)
B5
A5
G5
Gtrs. 3 and 4 repeat Rhy. Fig. 4 until fade-out
Gtrs. 5 and 6 repeat Riff A until fade-out
101 Gtr. 2
Bass repeats Bass Fig. 4
simile until fade-out
A5
B5
106
A5
110
G5
112


A5
114
B5
116
A5
G5
120
A5
123
hold and gradually release bend
A5
126
G5
A5
128
B5
132
A5
134

"FADE TO BLACK"



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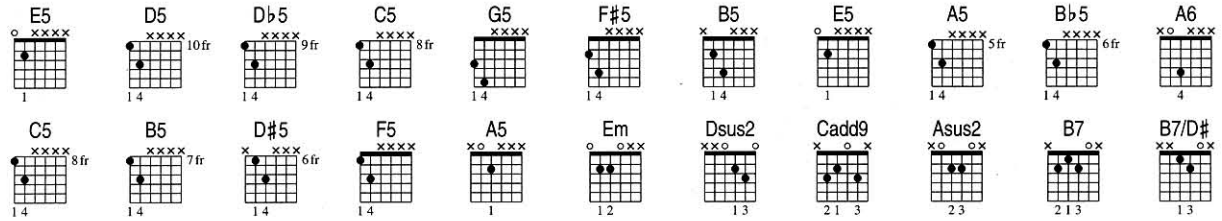
"MASTER OF PUPPETS"

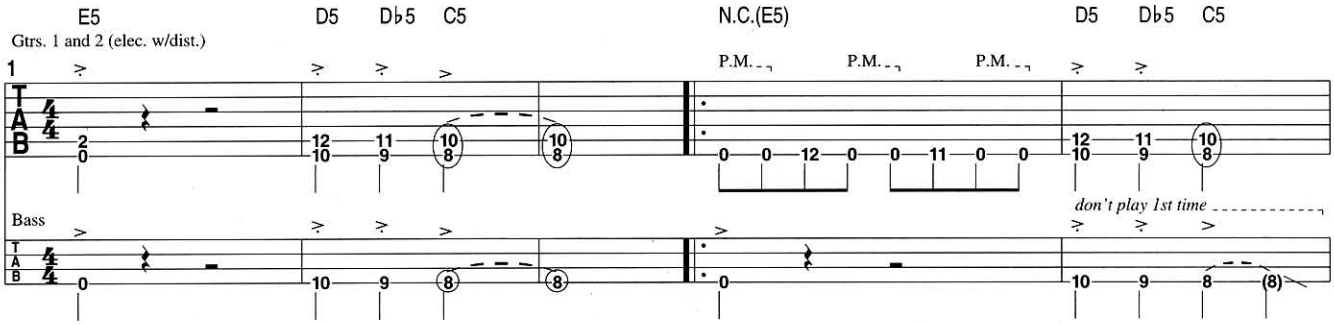
As heard on **MASTER OF PUPPETS** (ELEKTRA)

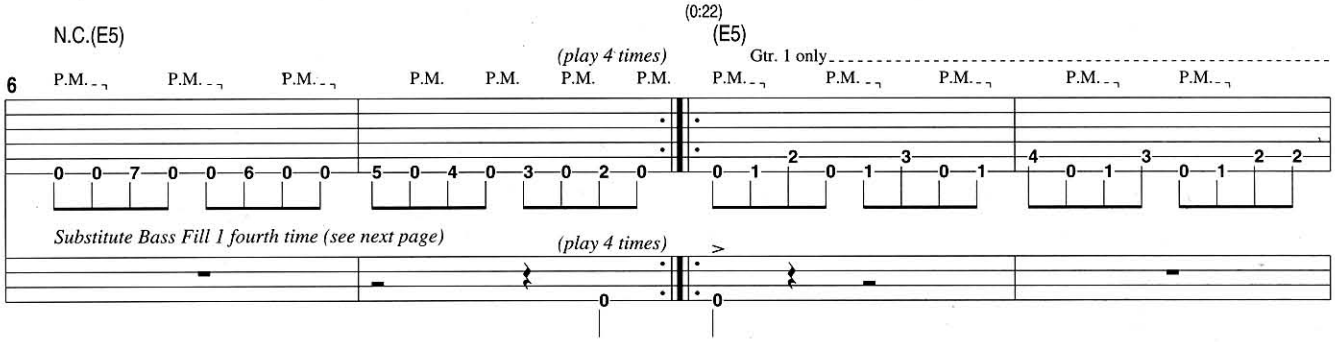
Words and Music by **James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett and Cliff Burton** ✶ *Transcribed by* **Andy Aledort**

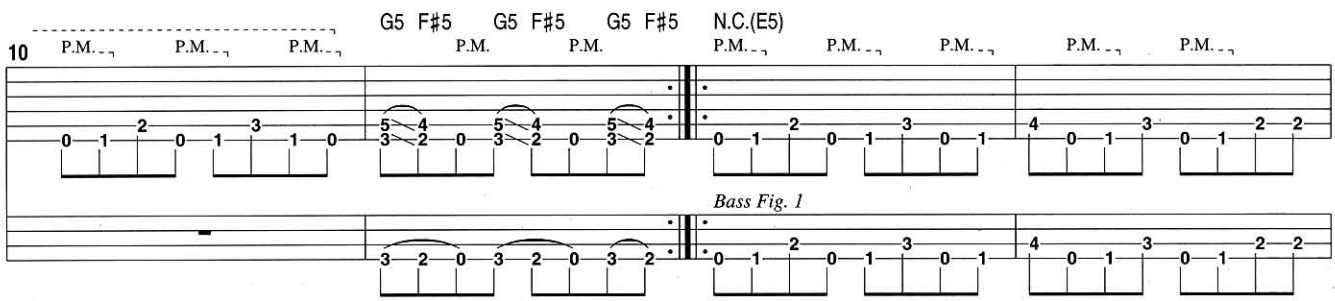


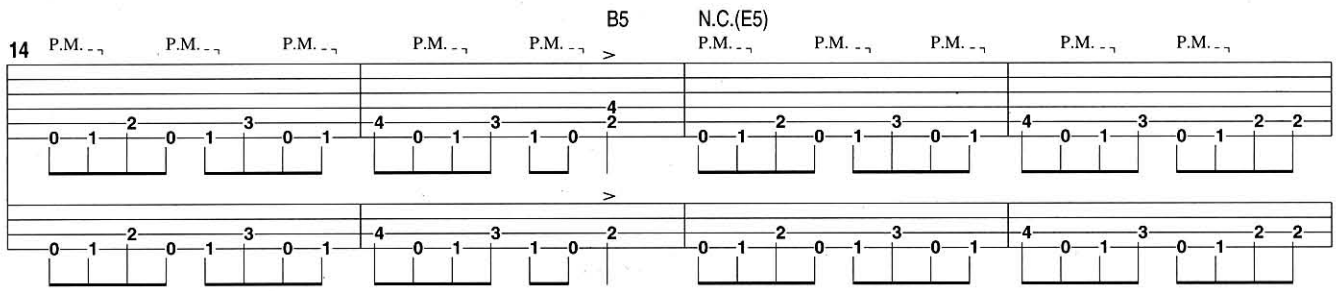
A **Intro** (0:00)

Fast ♩ = 215









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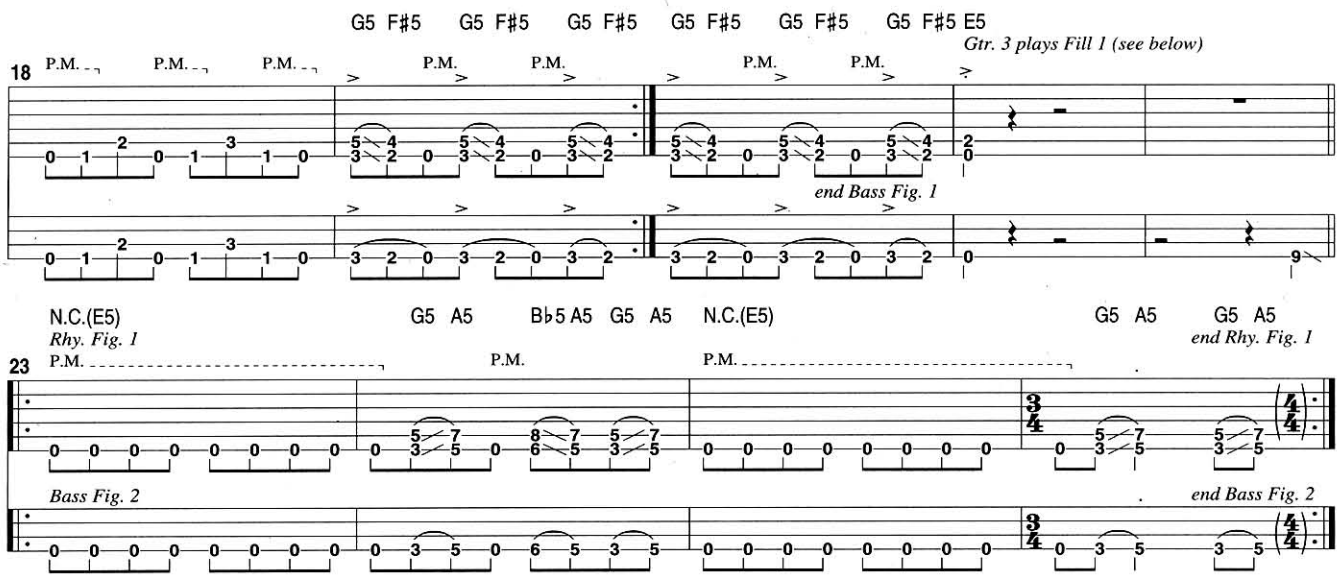
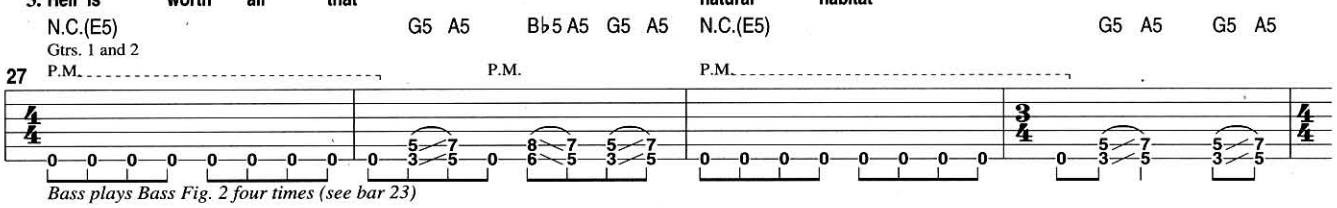


B **Verses** (1:00, 2:20, 6:49)

1. End of passion play
2. Needlework the way
3. Hell is worth all that

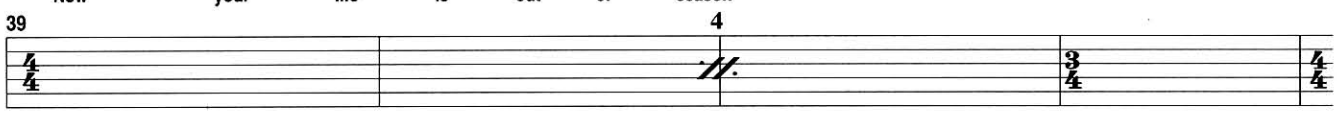
crumbling away
never you betray
natural habitat

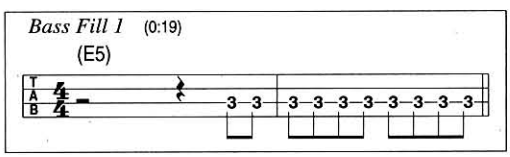


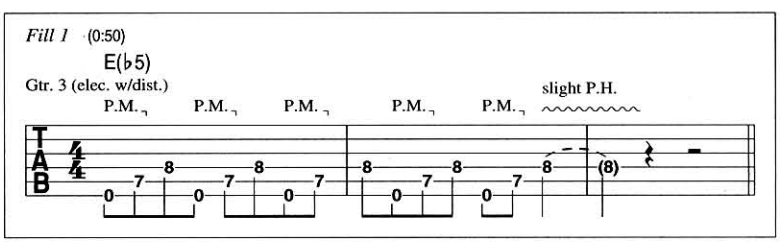
I'm your source of self - destruction
Life of death becoming clearer
Just a rhyme without a reason

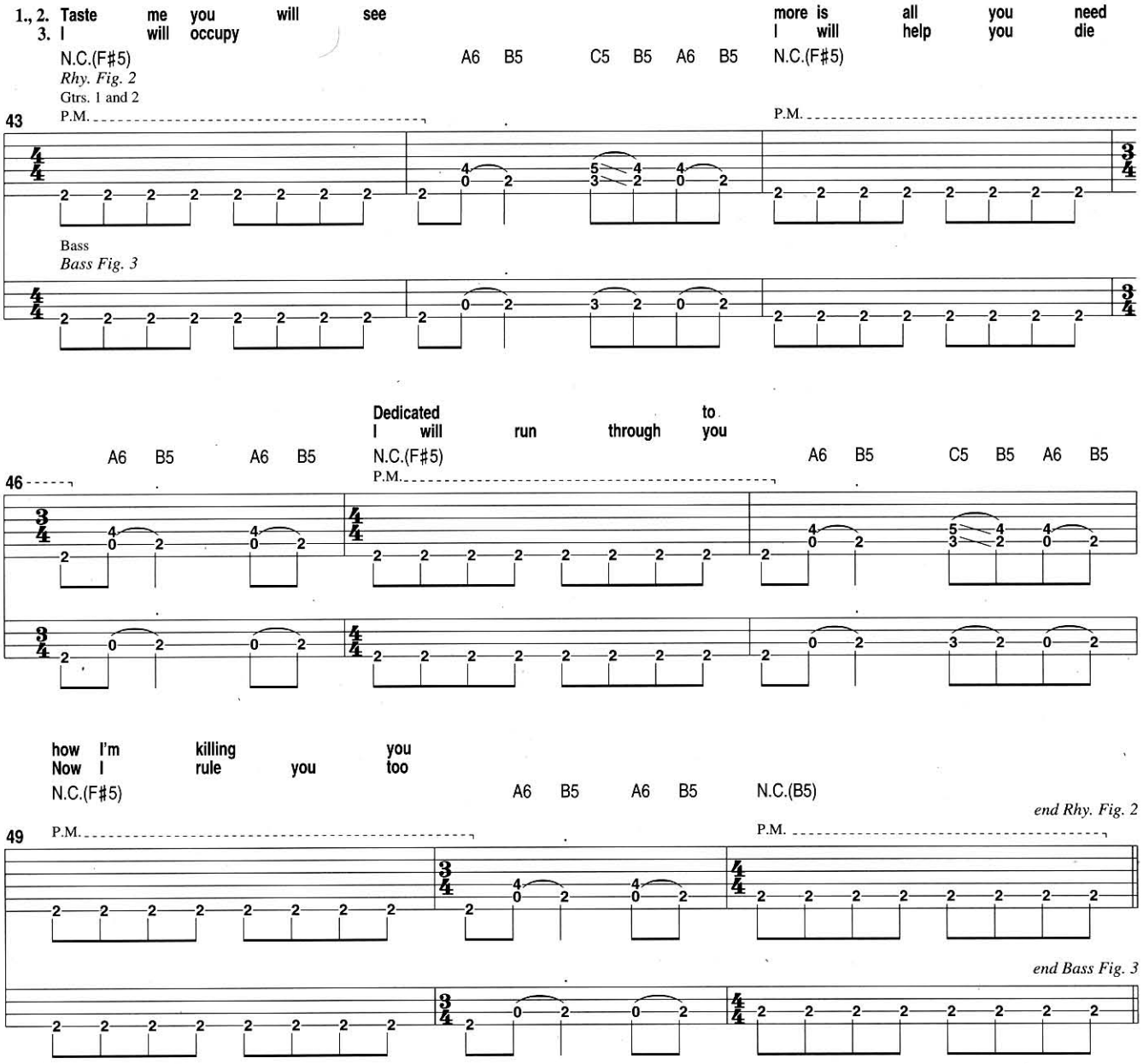
Veins that pump with fear sucking darkest clear
Pain monopoly ritual misery
Never ending maze drift on numbered days

leading on your death's construction
Chop your breakfast on a mirror
Now your life is out of season









C **Pre-chorus** (1:27, 2:47, 7:15)
w/half-time feel

1., 2., 3.

(2.) faster
(3.) master
(4.) faster

(1.) Come crawling
Obey your
Your life
O -

E5 D5 E5 N.C. C5 B5 (C5) D♯5 B5

Rhy. Fig. 3

end Rhy. Fig. 3

52 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

4.

D Chorus (1:48, 3:08, 7:36)
(end half-time feel)

bey your master master Master of puppets I'm
N.C.(B) E5 F5 E5

56

*Gtr. 2 plays top notes; Gtr. 1 plays bottom notes.

pulling your strings Twisting your mind and
F#5 G5 C5

60

smashing your dreams Blinded by me you can't
B5 A5 D5

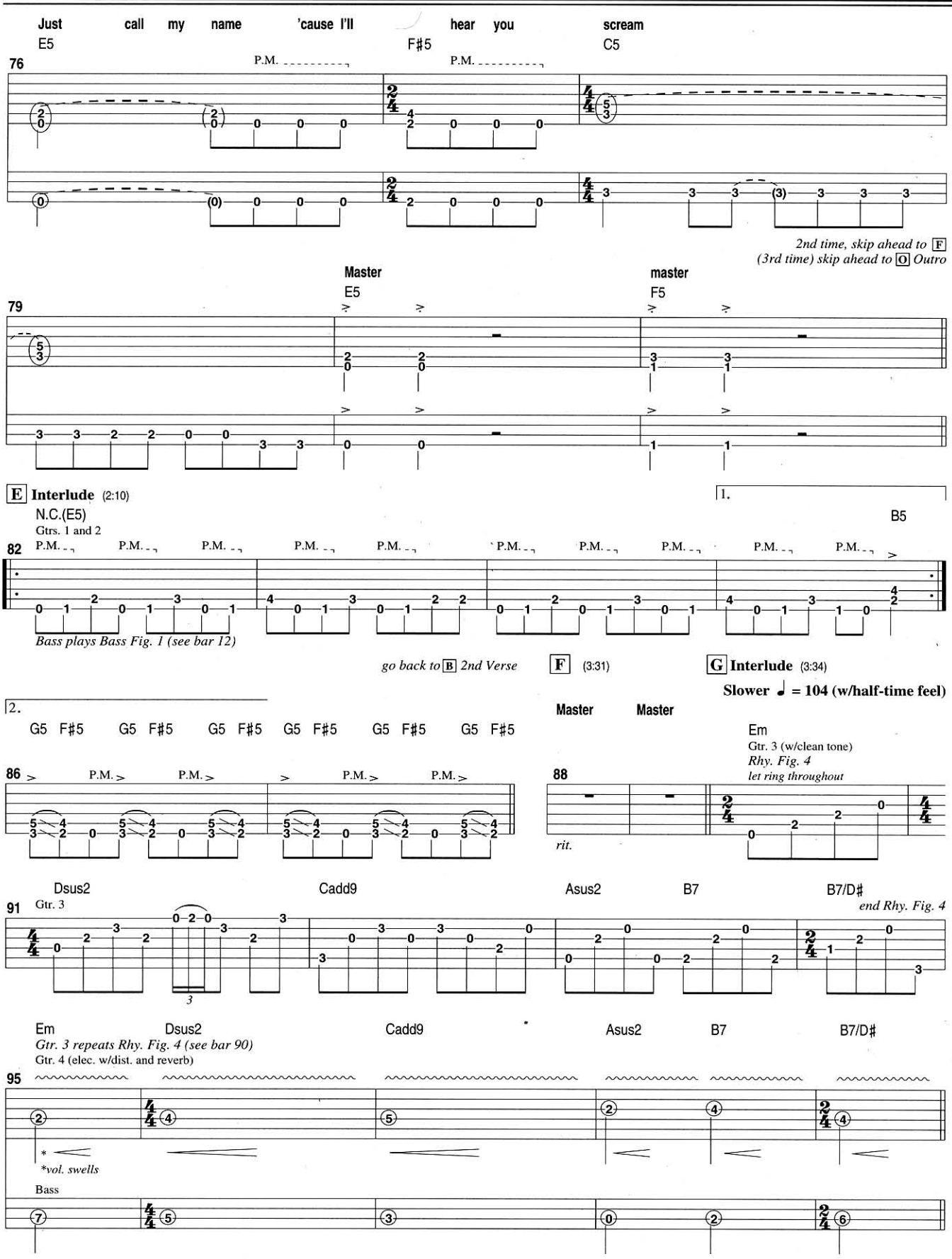
64

see a thing Just call my name 'cause I'll hear you
C5 B5 E5 D5

68

scream Master master
C5 E5 F5

72


Just call my name 'cause I'll hear you scream
E5 F♯5 C5
76
P.M.
P.M.
2nd time, skip ahead to F
(3rd time) skip ahead to O Outro
Master
master
E5
F5
79
E Interlude (2:10)
N.C.(E5)
Gtrs. 1 and 2
1.
B5
82
P.M.
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 12)
go back to B 2nd Verse
F (3:31)
G Interlude (3:34)
Slower ♩ = 104 (w/half-time feel)
2.
G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5
Master Master
Em
Gtr. 3 (w/clean tone)
Rhy. Fig. 4
let ring throughout
86
88
rit.
Dsus2 Cadd9 Asus2 B7 B7/D♯
91
Gtr. 3
end Rhy. Fig. 4
Em Dsus2 Cadd9 Asus2 B7 B7/D♯
Gtr. 3 repeats Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 90)
Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist. and reverb)
95
*vol. swells
Bass

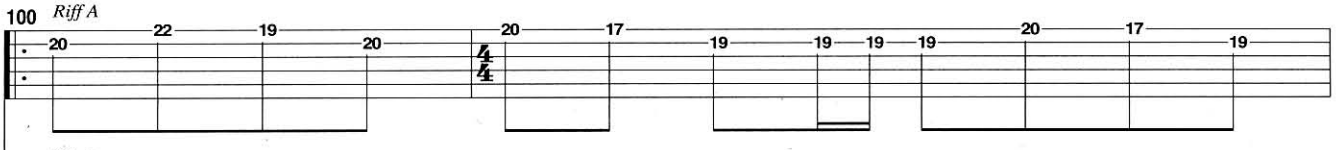
H (3:52)

Em Dsus2

Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 twice (see bar 90)

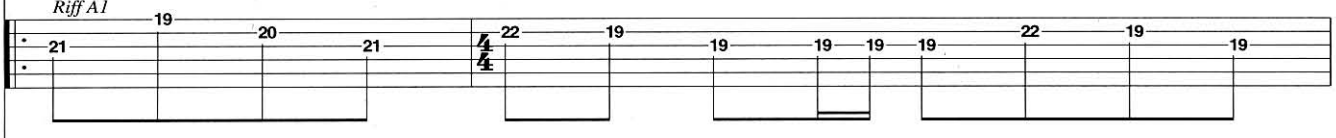
Gtr. 5

100 *Riff A*

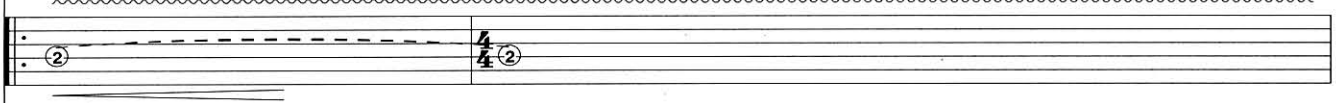


Gtr. 6

Riff A1



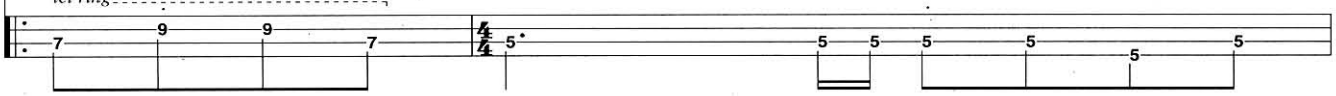
Gtr. 4 *(play 1st time only)*



Bass

Bass Fig. 4

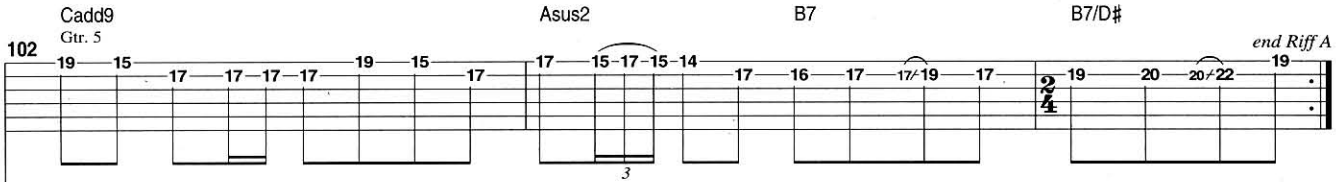
let ring



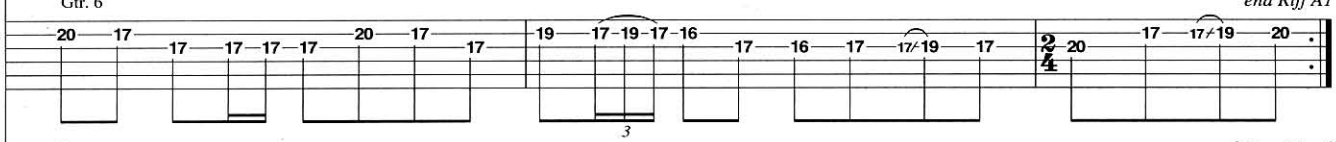
Cadd9 Asus2 B7 B7/D♯

Gtr. 5

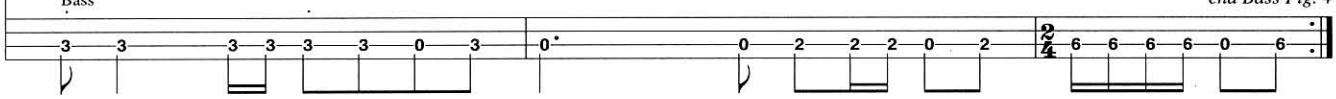
102 *end Riff A*



Gtr. 6 *end Riff A1*



Bass *end Bass Fig. 4*



I **1st Guitar Solo** (4:10)

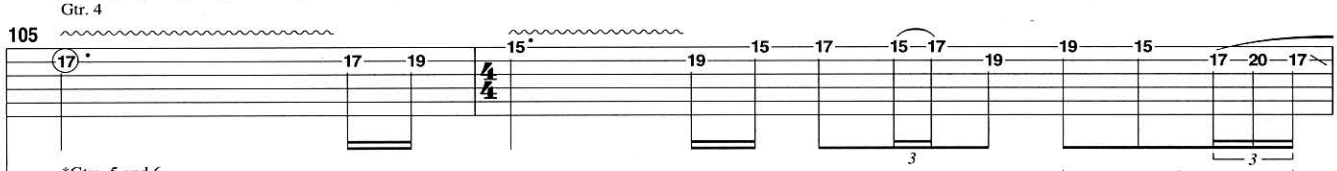
(end half-time feel)

Em Dsus2

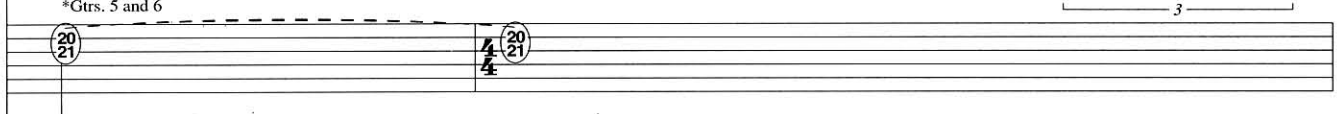
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 twice (see bar 90)

Gtr. 4

105



*Gtrs. 5 and 6

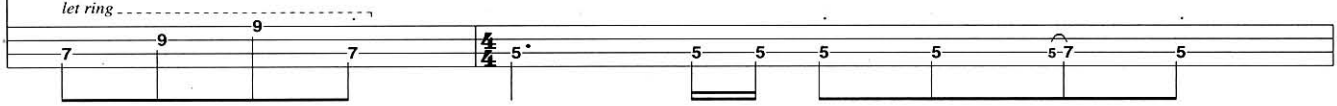


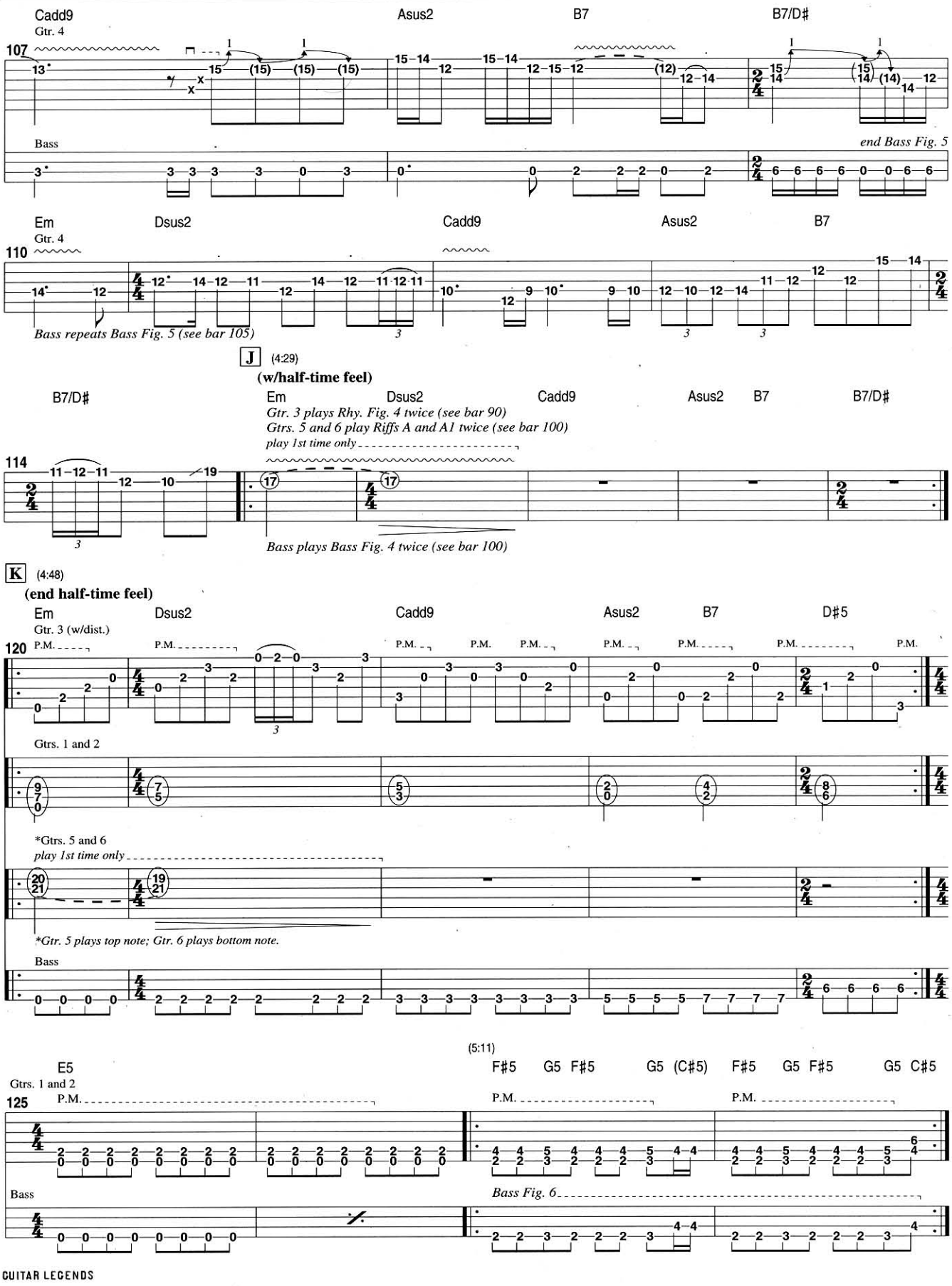
**Gtr. 5 plays high note; Gtr. 6 plays low note.*

Bass

Bass Fig. 5

let ring




Cadd9
Gtr. 4
Asus2
B7
B7/D♯
107
Bass
end Bass Fig. 5
Em
Dsus2
Cadd9
Asus2
B7
Gtr. 4
110
Bass repeats Bass Fig. 5 (see bar 105)
J (4:29)
(w/half-time feel)
B7/D♯
Em
Dsus2
Cadd9
Asus2
B7
B7/D♯
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 twice (see bar 90)
Grtrs. 5 and 6 play Riffs A and A1 twice (see bar 100)
play 1st time only
114
Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 twice (see bar 100)
K (4:48)
(end half-time feel)
Em
Dsus2
Cadd9
Asus2
B7
D♯5
Gtr. 3 (w/dist.)
120
P.M.
Grtrs. 1 and 2
*Grtrs. 5 and 6
play 1st time only
*Gtr. 5 plays top note; Gtr. 6 plays bottom note.
Bass
(5:11)
E5
F♯5
G5
F♯5
G5
(C♯5)
F♯5
G5
F♯5
G5
C♯5
Grtrs. 1 and 2
125
Bass
Bass Fig. 6

L Bridge (5:20)

(1.) Master — master — where's the — dreams — that I've — been — after
(2.) Master — master — promised — only — lies
(3.) Laughter — laughter — all I — hear — or — see — is — laughter
(4.) Laughter — laughter — laughing — at — my — cries

F♯5 G5 F♯5 G5 (C♯5) F♯5 G5 F♯5 G5 C♯5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

129 P.M. (release P.M. 4th time) P.M. (play 4 times)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 6 four times (see bar 127)

Original Tempo ♩ = 215

Fix me

G5 F♯5 N.C.

131 Gtrs. 1 and 2 pick scrape

Bass

M 2nd Guitar Solo (5:43)

Gtr. 3 N.C.(E5) G5 A5 B♭5 A5 G5 A5 N.C.(E5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 four times (see bar 23)

135

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 23)

138 G5 A5 G5 A5 N.C.(E5) G5 A5 B♭5 A5 G5 A5

141 N.C.(E5) G5 A5 G5 A5 N.C.(E5) N.H. w/bar

pitch: F -3½ -2 -5½

144 G5 A5 B♭5 A5 G5 A5 N.C.(E5) G5 A5 G5 A5

+1½ partial P.H. P.M.

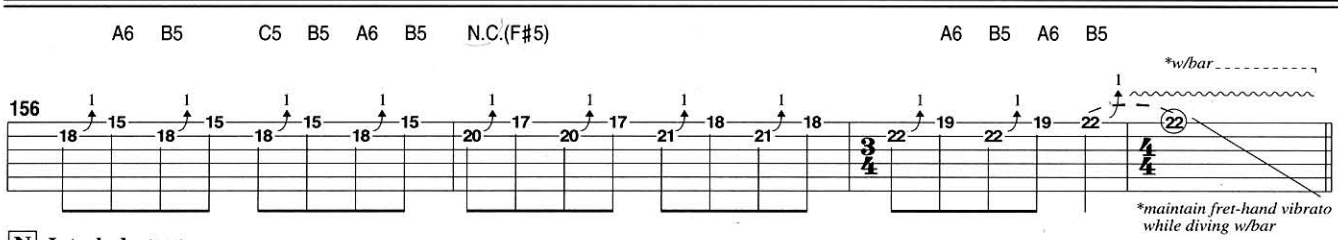
147 N.C.(E5) G5 A5 B♭5 A5 G5 A5 N.C.(E5)

150 G5 A5 G5 A5 N.C.(F♯5) A6 B5 C5 B5 A6 B5

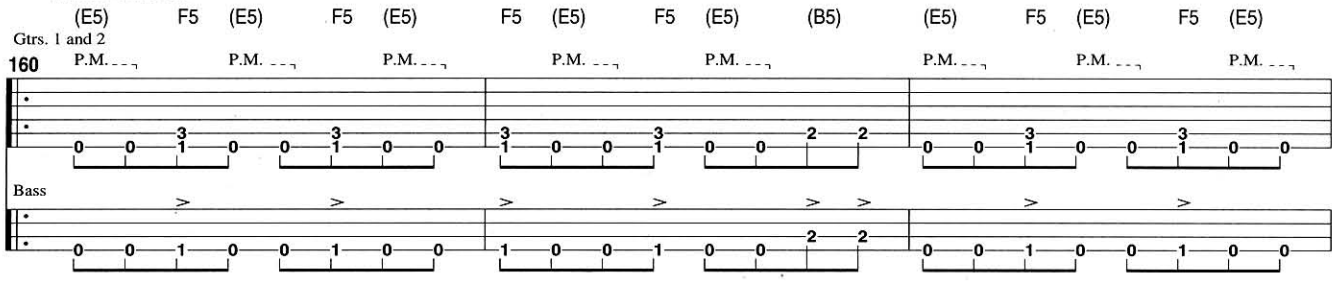
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 43)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 43)

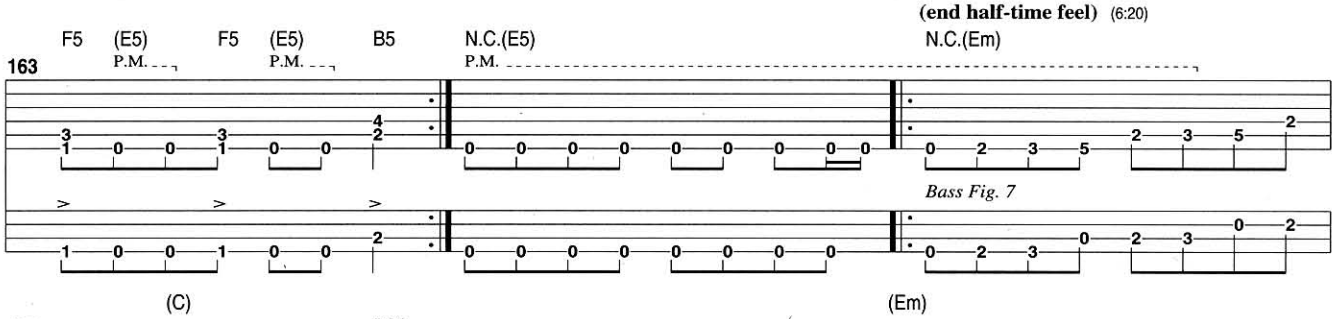
153 N.C.(F♯5) A6 B5 A6 B5 N.C.(F♯5)

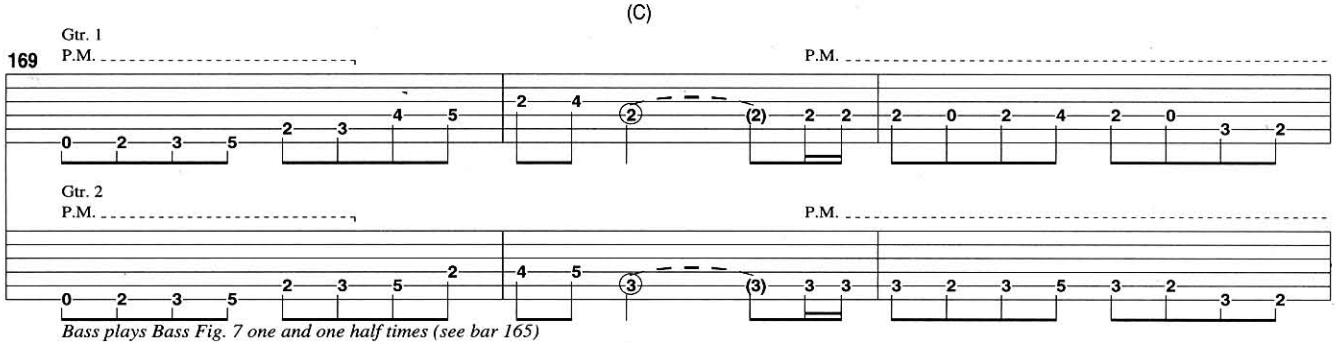


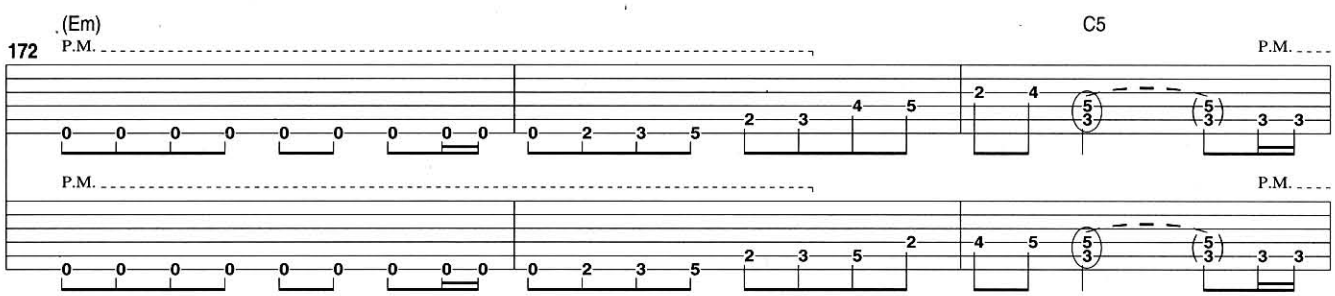
N **Interlude** (6:09)
w/half-time feel

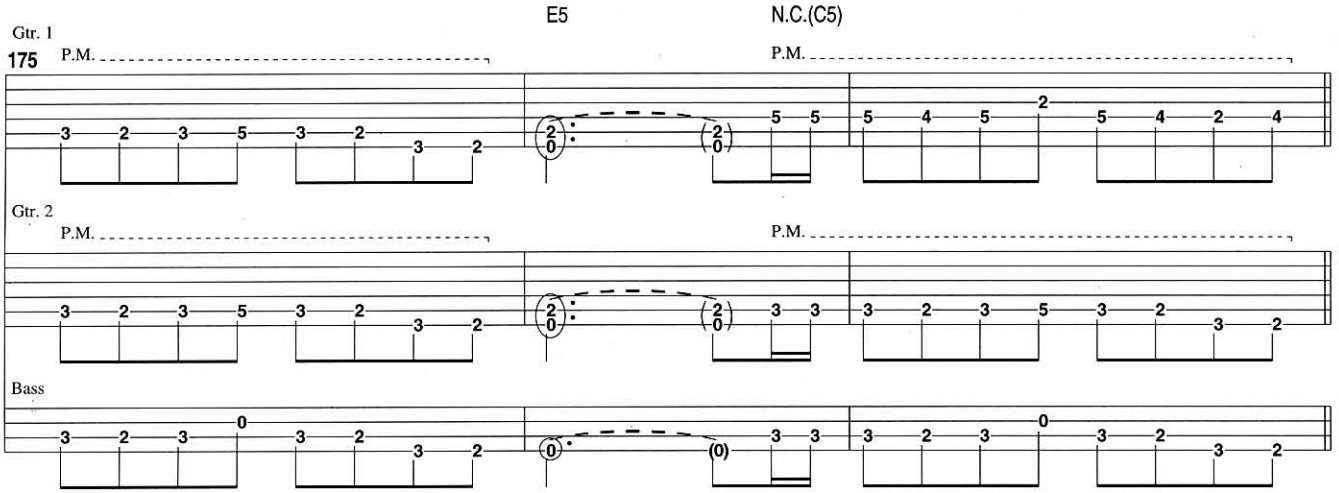


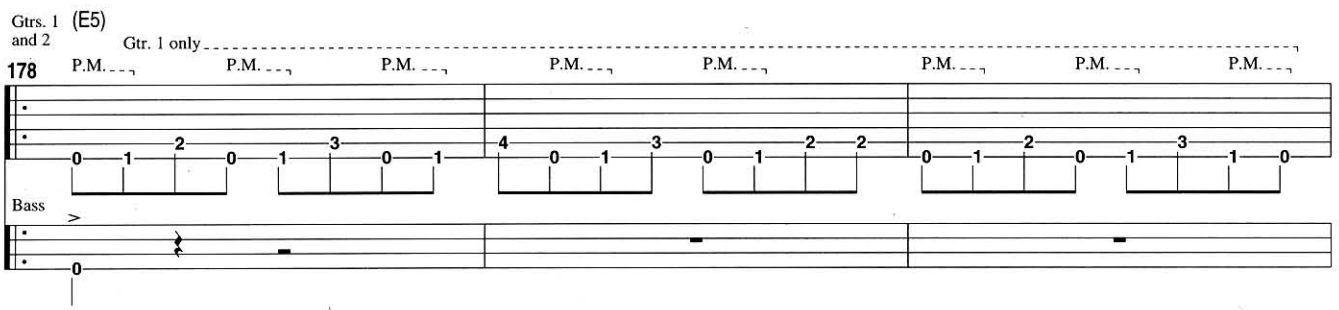
(end half-time feel) (6:20)



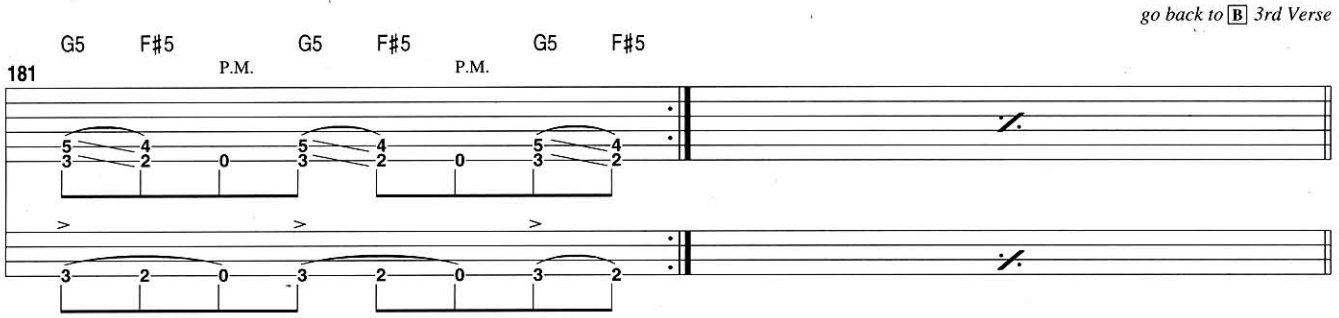




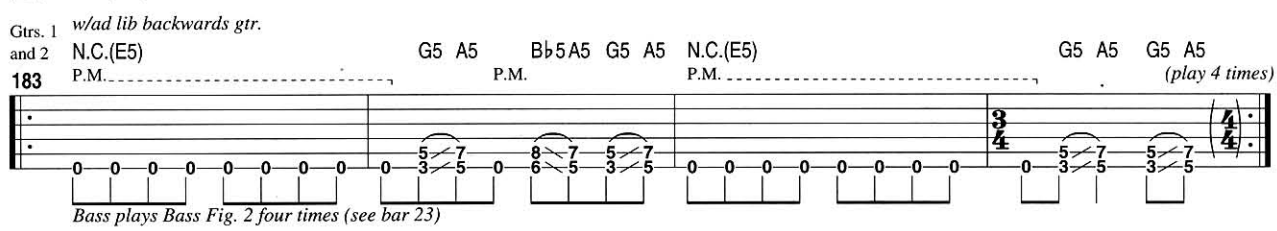




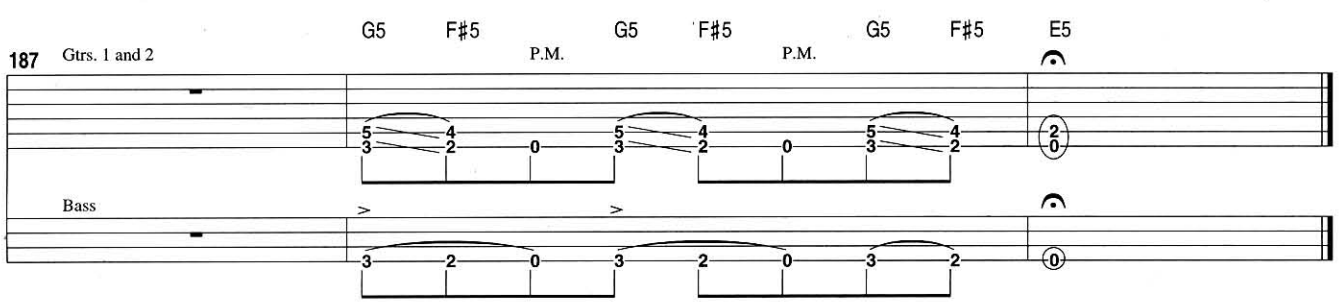
go back to B *3rd Verse*



O Outro (7:58)



Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 23)



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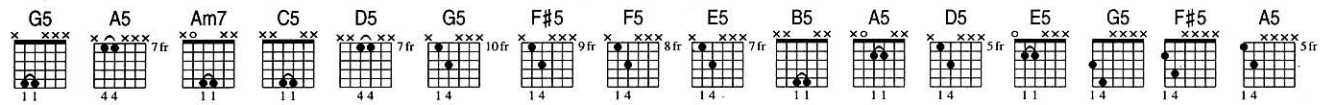
"SEEK AND DESTROY"

As heard on **KILL 'EM ALL** (ELEKTRA)

Words and Music by **James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich** ✶ *Transcribed by* **Andy Aledort**



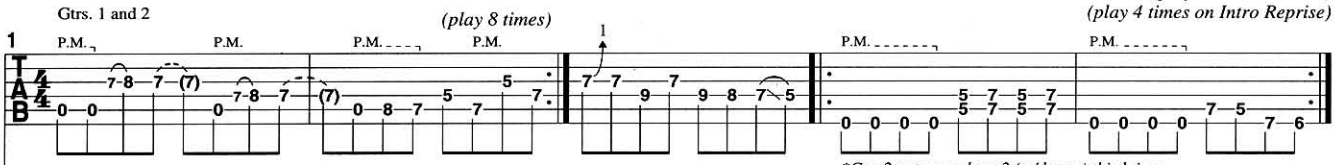
A **Intro/Intro Reprise** (0:00, 4:13)

Moderately ♩ **= 140**

N.C.(A5) (E5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

(play 8 times)



**Gtr. 2 enters on beat 2 (w/drums) third time*

Bass

Intro: tacet 1st 3 times, then play Bass Fill 1 (see below), then music as shown.

Intro Reprise: play Bass Fill 6 (see below), then Bass Fill 1 (see below), then music as shown.

(play 8 times)

(0:29, 4:42)

(4th time on Intro) **All**

right *(4th time on Intro Reprise)* **3. Our**

(E5) G5 A5 G5 A5 (E5)

**Gtr. 2 tacet 1st two times on Intro* *(play 8 times on Intro)*

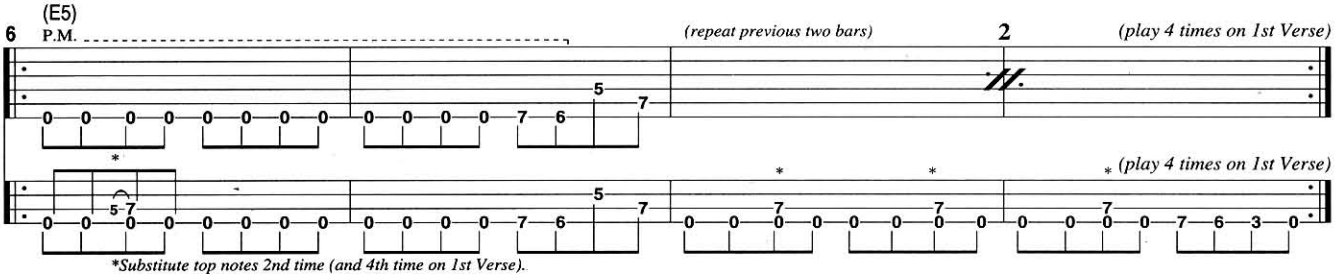
(play 4 times on Intro Reprise)

Intro: Substitute Bass Fill 2 (see next page) first, then music as shown.

B **Verses** *(1st Verse vocals enter third time)* (0:56, 2:16, 4:54)

1.	Scanning	the	scene		in	the	city	tonight			We're looking		for you			to	start	up a	fight
	There's an	evil			feeling		in our	brains		but	it's	nothing		new	You know it		drives	us	insane
2.	no	escape				and	that's for	sure				This is	the end		we won't		take	anymore	
	Say	goodbye		to	the	world	you	live in					You've always been taking			and	now	you're giving	
3.	brains are	on	fire		with the		feeling	to	kill		And it	won't go		away		until	our	dreams are	fulfilled
	There is	only		one	thing	on	our	minds			Don't try	running		away		'cause you're	the one	we will	find

(E5)

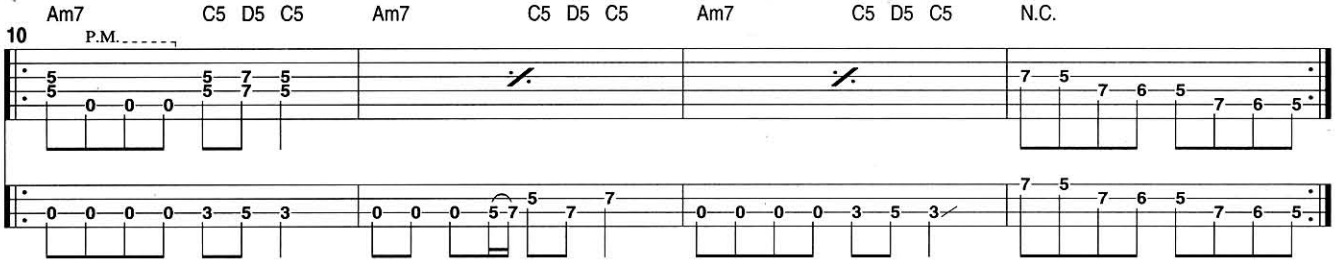


**Substitute top notes 2nd time (and 4th time on 1st Verse).*

C **Pre-chorus** (1:24, 2:30, 5:08)

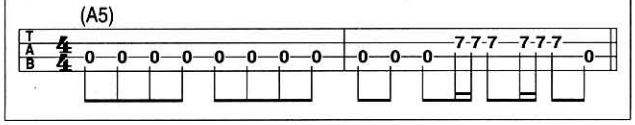
Running		on	our	way		Hiding		You	will	pay		Dying		one	thousand	deaths			
Am7		C5	D5	C5		Am7		C5	D5	C5		Am7		C5	D5	C5		N.C.	

1.



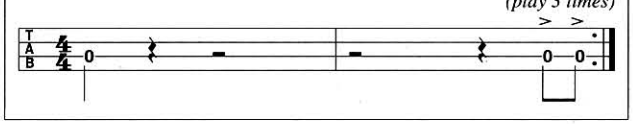
Bass Fill 1 (0:10, 4:23)

(A5)



Bass Fill 6 (4:13)

(play 3 times)



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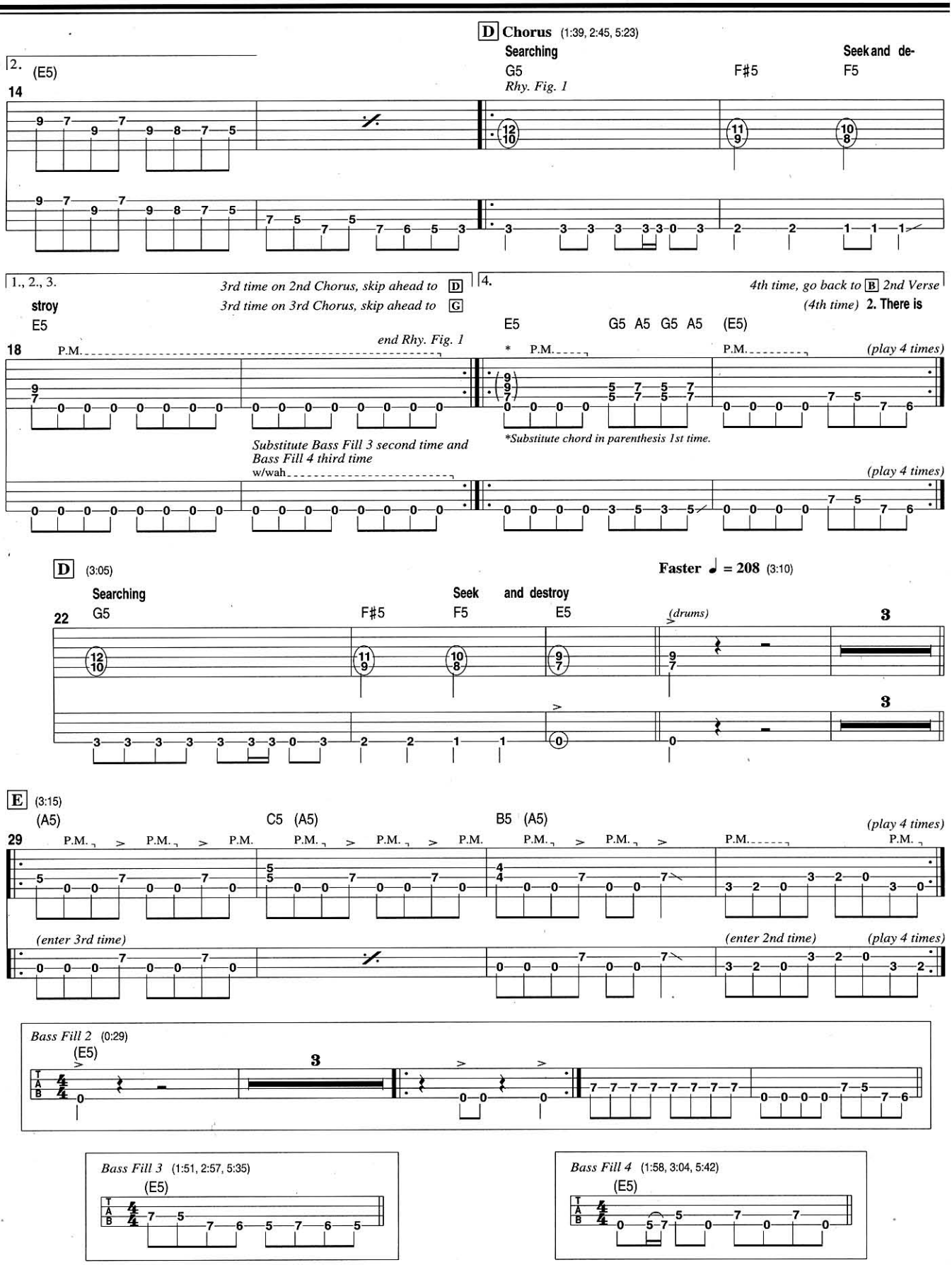
D Chorus (1:39, 2:45, 5:23)
Searching
G5
F#5
Seek and de-
F5
Rhy. Fig. 1
2. (E5)
14
1., 2., 3.
3rd time on 2nd Chorus, skip ahead to D
3rd time on 3rd Chorus, skip ahead to G
4.
4th time, go back to B 2nd Verse
(4th time) 2. There is
stroy
E5
E5
G5 A5 G5 A5 (E5)
18
P.M.
end Rhy. Fig. 1
(play 4 times)
*Substitute chord in parenthesis 1st time.
Substitute Bass Fill 3 second time and Bass Fill 4 third time
w/wah
D (3:05)
Faster ♩ = 208 (3:10)
Searching
Seek and destroy
22
G5
F#5
F5
E5
(drums)
3
E (3:15)
(A5)
C5 (A5)
B5 (A5)
29
(play 4 times)
(enter 3rd time)
(enter 2nd time)
Bass Fill 2 (0:29)
(E5)
Bass Fill 3 (1:51, 2:57, 5:35)
(E5)
Bass Fill 4 (1:58, 3:04, 5:42)
(E5)

F **Guitar Solo** (3:33)

G5 F♯5 F5 E5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 three and one half times (see bar 16)

33 Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Bass Fig. 1 *end Bass Fig. 1*

G5 F♯5 F5 E5

37

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 two and one half times (see bar 33)

G5 F♯5 F5 E5

41

(3:51)

G5 F♯5 F5 N.C.(E5)

45

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 three and one half times (see below)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see below)

G5 (E5) F♯5 (E5)

48 P.M.

G5 (E5) F♯5 (E5)

51

G5 (E5)

54

Rhy. Fig. 2 (3:51)

N.C.(E5) G5 (E5) F♯5(E5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M.

Bass Fig. 2

Bass

F♯5 (E5)
G5 (E5)
P.M.
go back to A Intro Reprise
F♯5 (E5)
Gtr. 3
A5
Gtrs. 1 and 2
P.M.
Bass plays Bass Fill 5 (see below)
G (5:43)
Searching
Seek and destroy
ha ha ha ha
G5
F♯5
F5
E5
H Outro (5:50)
1., 2., 3.
D5
4.
1.-7.
8.
A5
(play 3 times)
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1
Bass Fill 5 (4:10)

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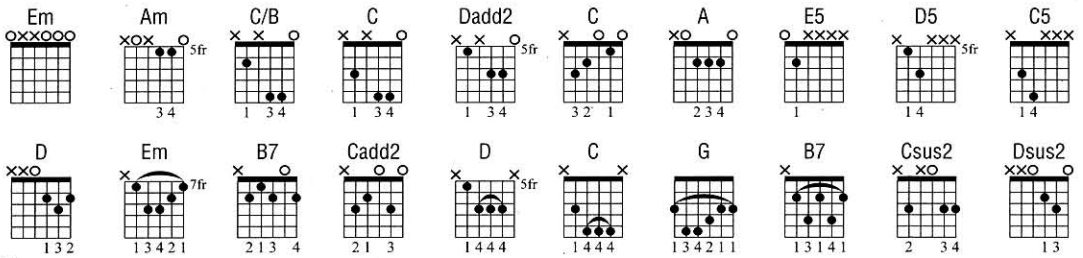
"NOTHING ELSE MATTERS"

As heard on **METALLICA** (ELEKTRA)

Words and Music by **James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich** ✶ *Transcribed by* **Jimmy Brown**



A **Intro** (0:00)

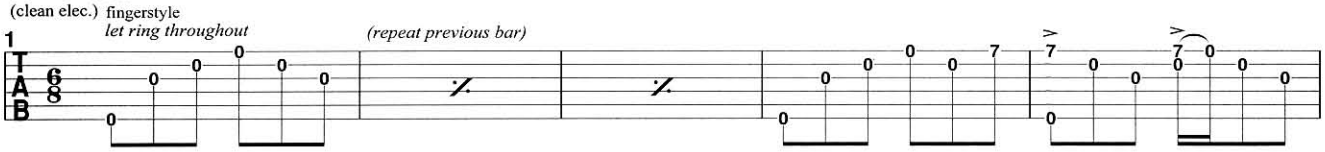
Slowly ♩. = 46

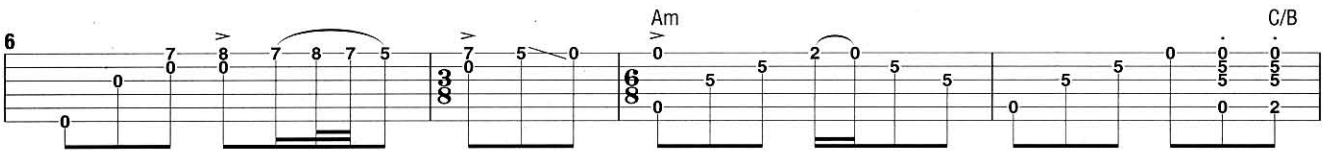
Gtr. 1 (clean elec.) Em

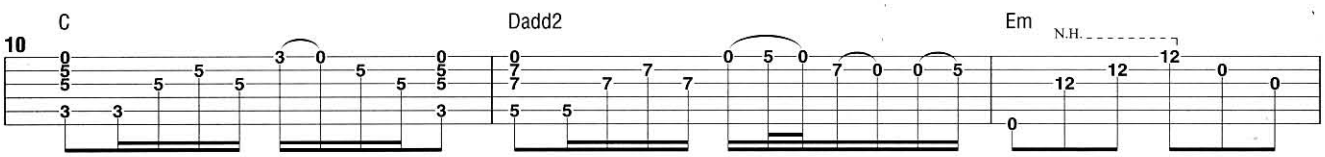
fingerstyle

let ring throughout

(repeat previous bar)





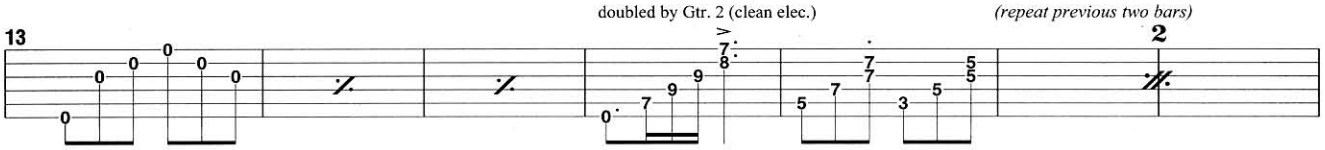


(0:37)

Em D C Em D C

doubled by Gtr. 2 (clean elec.)

(repeat previous two bars)



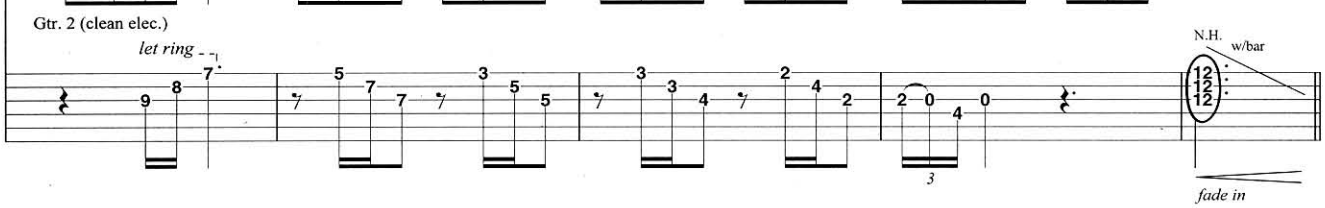
Em D C G B7 Em

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 1

Gtr. 2 (clean elec.)

let ring



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B **1st Verse** (0:59)

So close no matter how far **Couldn't be much more from the heart**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 N.C. Em D Csus2 N.C.

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 2

25

Bass

Bass Fig. 1

Forever trusting who we are **and nothing else matters**

Em D Csus2 G B7 Em N.C.

end Rhy. Fig. 2 *Rhy. Fig. 2a*

29

end Bass Fig. 1

C **2nd Verse** (1:22)

Never opened myself this way **Life is ours we live it our way**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 N.C. Em D Cadd2 N.C.

Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 25)

Gtr. 3 (w/dist.)

**Rhy. Fig. 3*

34

Gtr. 4 (w/dist.)

**includes Gtrs. 3 and 4*

Bass repeats Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 25)

All these words I don't just say **And nothing else matters**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 G B7 Em

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a (see bar 33)

38

end Rhy. Fig. 3

D **3rd Verse** (1:45)

Trust I seek and I find in you **Every day for us something new**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 N.C. Em D Cadd2

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 25)

Gtr. 2 (clean tone, w/pick)

Rhy. Fig. 4

43

Bass repeats first four bars of Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 25)

Open mind for a different view **And nothing else matters**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 G B7 Em C A

end Rhy. Fig. 4 Synth (arr. for gtr.)

47

Bass Fig. 2

Gtr. 2

end Bass Fig. 2

E **1st Chorus** (2:08)

Never cared for what they do **Never cared for what they**

D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D C A D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Rhy. Fig. 5

52

Bass

Bass Fig. 3

know oh but I know

C A D Em

Gtrs. 3 and 4 play Rhy. Fill 2 (see next page)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 23)

Synth plays Rhy. Fill 1 (see below)

55 Gtr. 2

end Rhy. Fig. 5

end Bass Fig. 3

F **4th Verse** (2:24)

So close no matter how far **Couldn't be much more**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 N.C. Em

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 1

59

Bass plays first four bars of Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 25)

from the heart **Forever trusting who we are**

D Csus2 N.C. Em D Dsus4 Csus2

62

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 47)

And nothing else matters

G B7 Em C A

Gtrs. 1 and 2

65

Rhy. Fill 1 (2:19)

Synth arr. for gtr.

(Em)

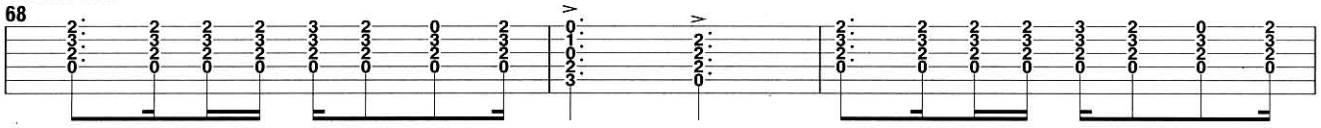
G **2nd Chorus** (2:47)

Never cared for what they do Never cared for what they

D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D C A D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D

Gtrs. 1 and 2

68



Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 52)

know oh but I know

C A D Em

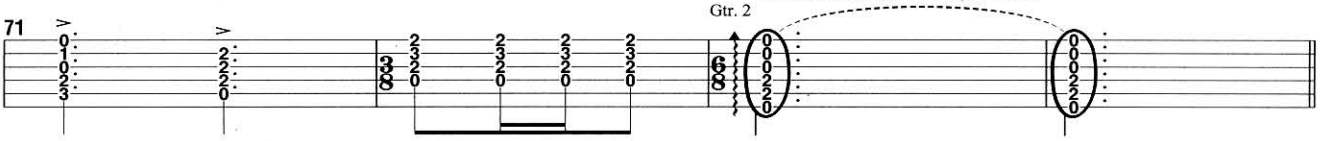
Gtrs. 3 and 4 play Rhy. Fill 2 (see below)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 23)

Synth plays Rhy. Fill 1 (see below)

Gtr. 2

71

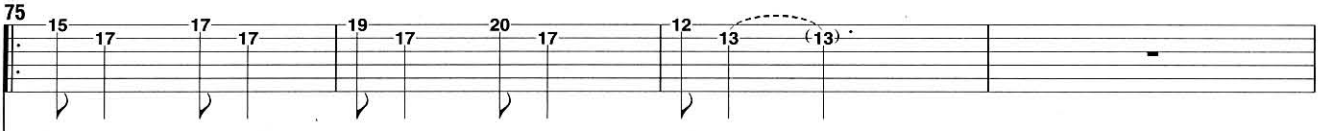


H **Interlude** (3:03)

Em Am

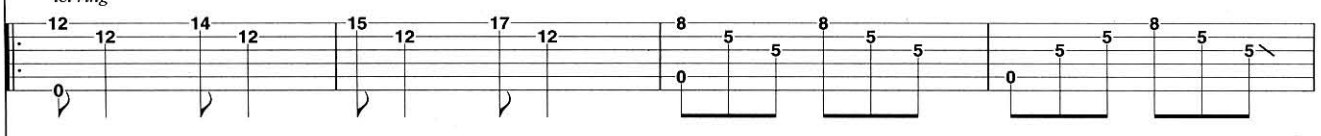
Gtr. 2

75

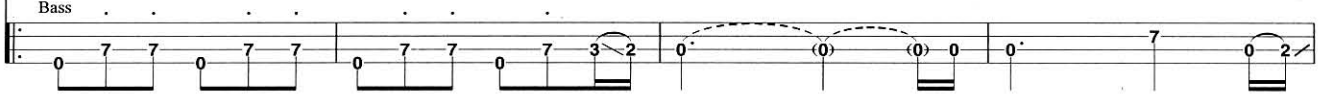


Gtr. 1

let ring



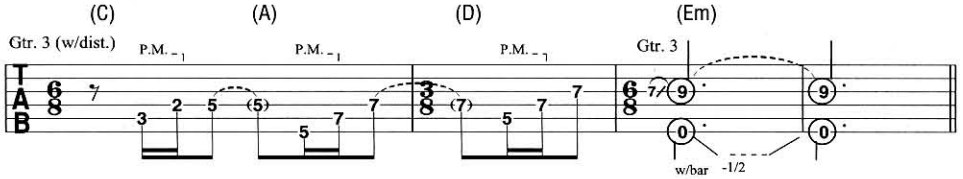
Bass



Rhy. Fill 2 (2:15, 2:54)

(C) (A) (D) (Em)

Gtr. 3 (w/dist.) P.M. P.M. P.M. Gtr. 3



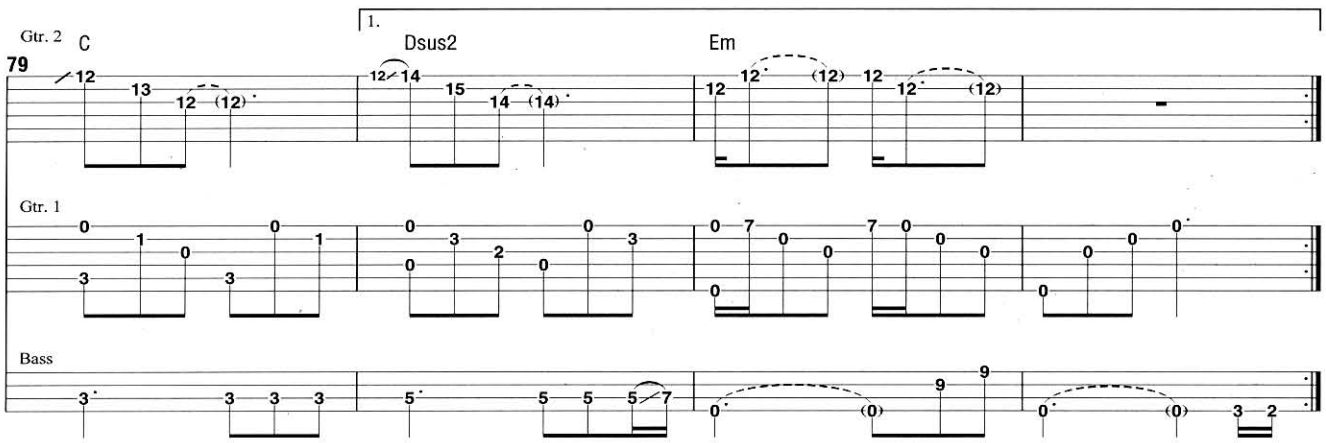
w/bar -1/2

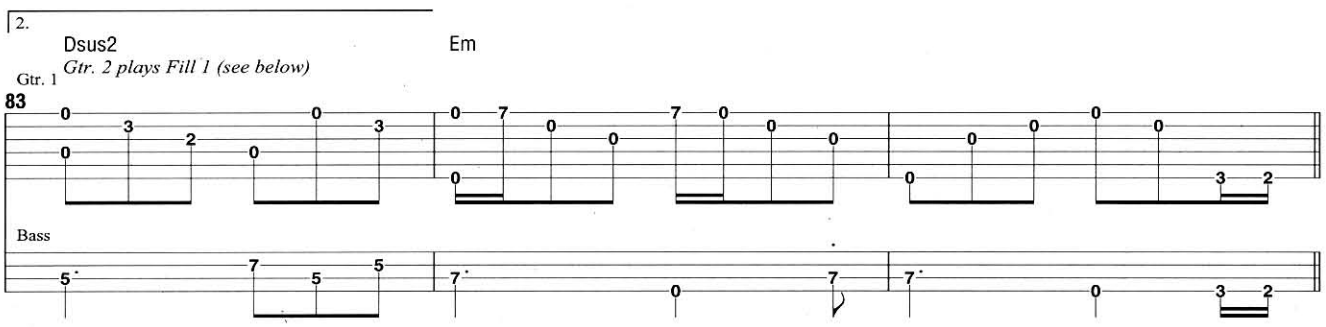
Gtr. 4 (clean elec.)

Rhy. Fill 3 (2:58)

(Em) (Am)

Synth arr. for gtr.



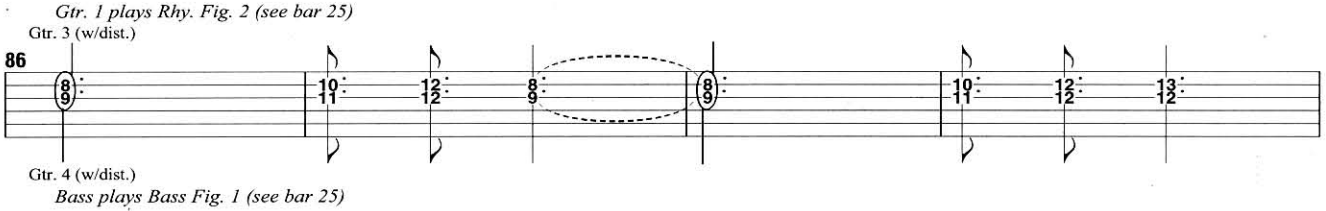


I **5th Verse** (3:44)

I never opened myself this way **Life is ours we live it our way**

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 N.C. Em D Cadd2 N.C.

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 25)

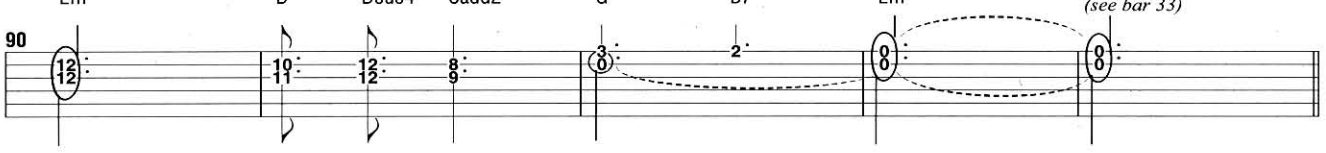


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 25)

All these words I don't just say **And nothing else matters**

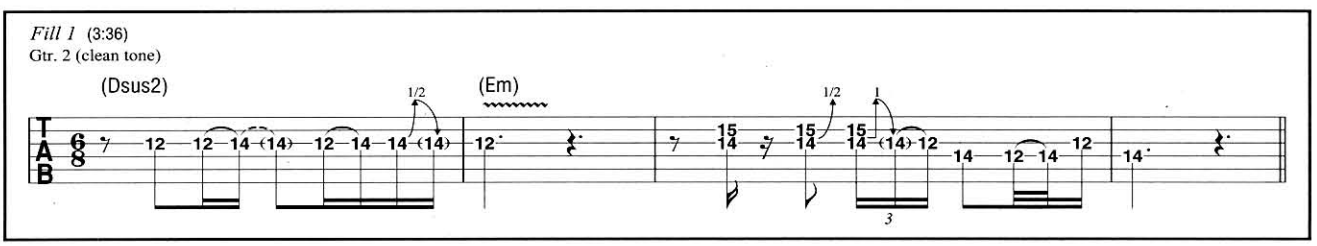
Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 G B7 Em

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a (see bar 33)



Fill 1 (3:36)

Gtr. 2 (clean tone)



J **6th Verse** (4:06)

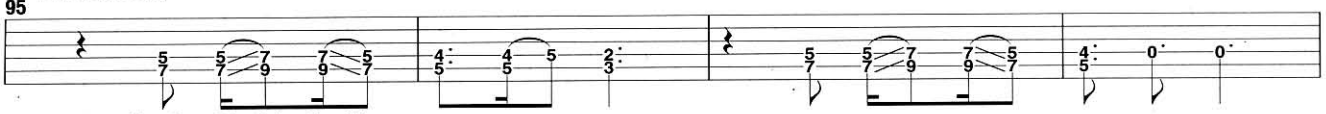
Trust I seek and I find in you Everyday for us something new

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 N.C. Em D Cadd2

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 25)

Gtr. 2 (clean tone)

95



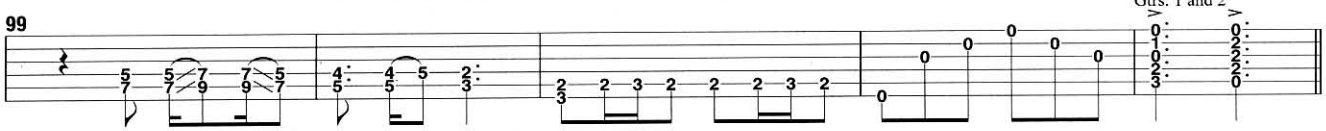
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 25)

Open mind for a different view And nothing else matters

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 G B7 Em

Gtrs. 1 and 2

99

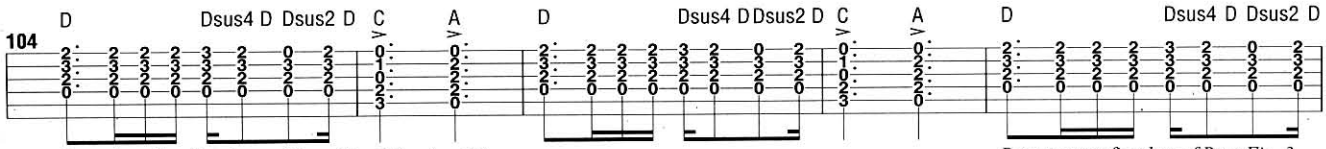


K **3rd Chorus** (4:29)

Never cared for what they say Never cared for games they play Never cared for what they

D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D C A D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D C A D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D

104



Bass plays first four bars of Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 52)

Bass repeats first bar of Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 52)

do Never cared for what they know Oh and I know Yeah yeah

C A D Dsus4D Dsus2D C A D Em E5

Gtr. 4 plays Rhy. Fill 2 (see page 4)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 23)

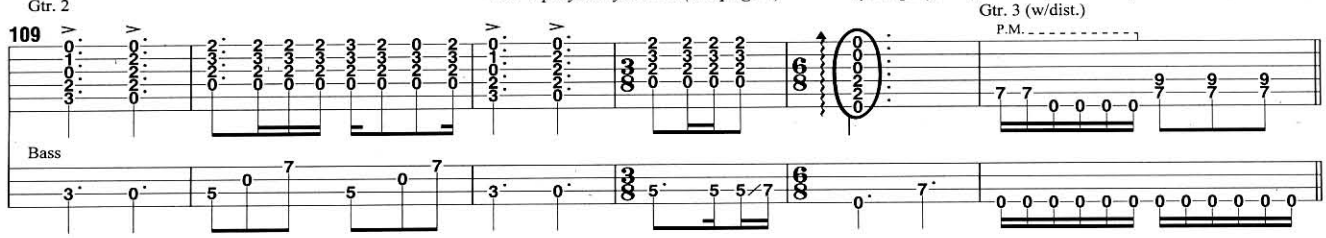
Synth plays Rhy. Fill 4 (see below)

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 3 (w/dist.)

P.M.

109



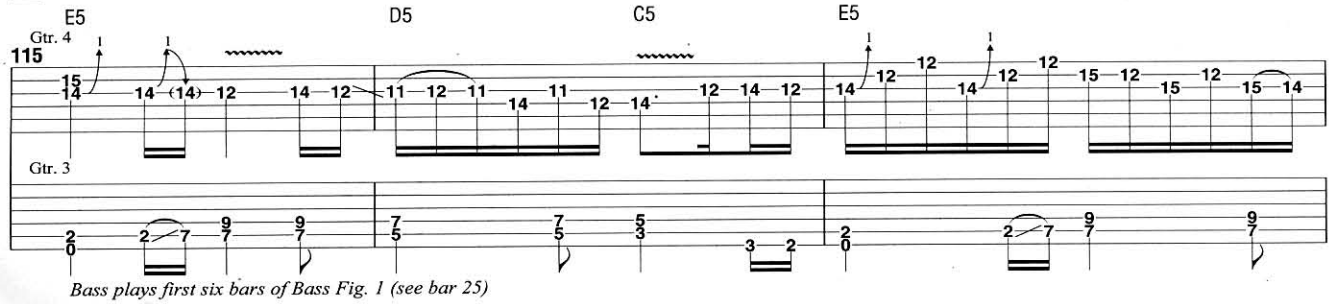
Bass

L **Guitar Solo** (4:56)

E5 D5 C5 E5

Gtr. 4

115



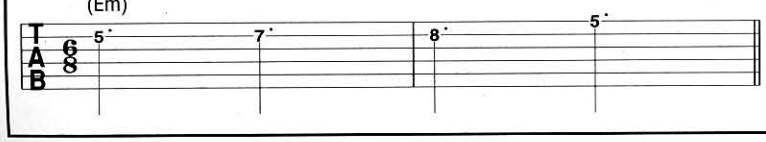
Gtr. 3

Bass plays first six bars of Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 25)

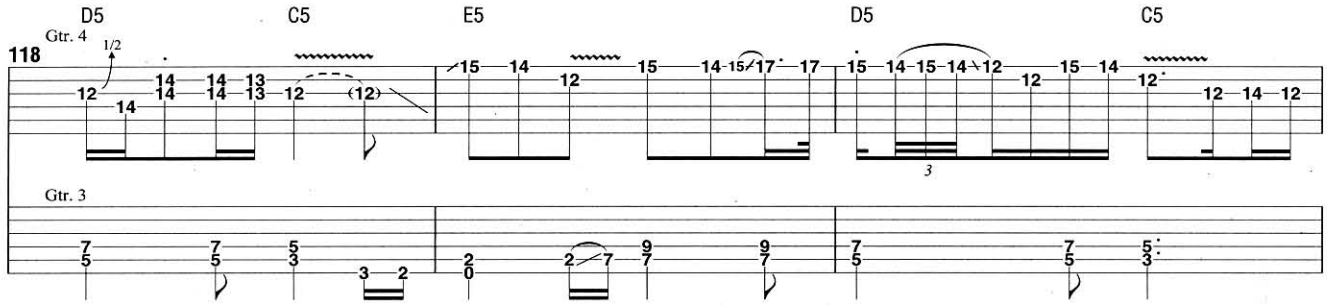
Rhy. Fill 4 (4:51)

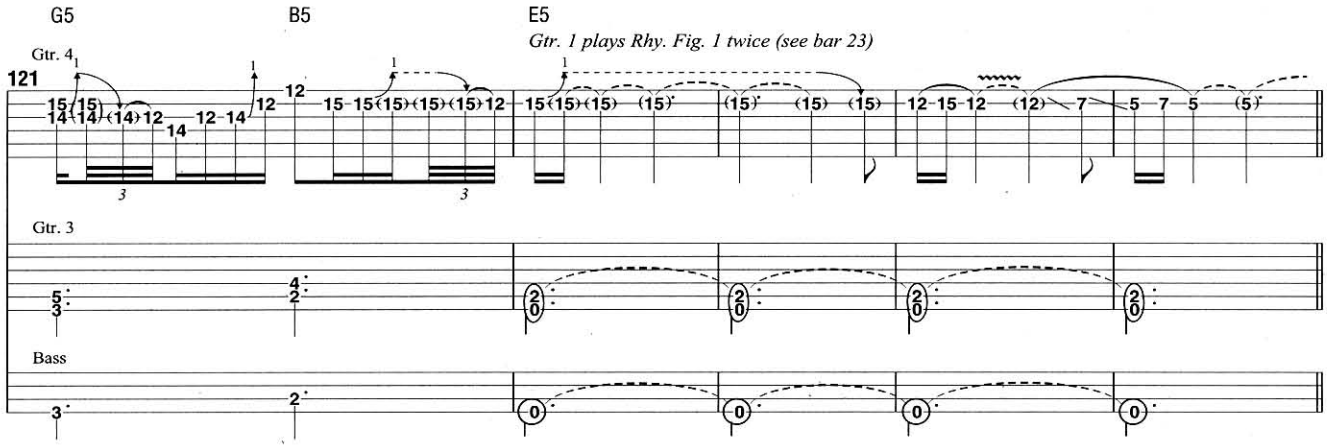
Synth arr. for gtr.

(Em)



"NOTHING ELSE MATTERS"





M **7th Verse** (5:24)

So close no matter how far Couldn't be much more from the heart Forever trusting who we are

Em D Dsus4 Cadd2 Em N.C. D Cadd2 N.C. Em D Dsus4 Cadd4

Gtr. 1 plays 1st six bars of Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 25)'

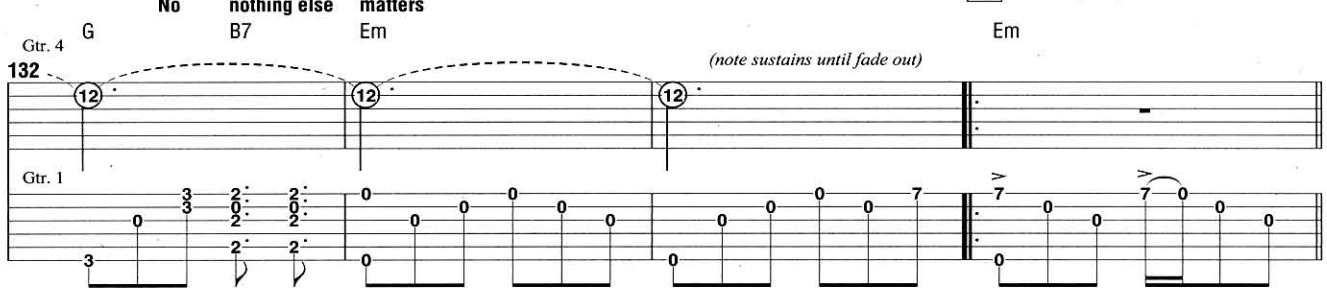
No nothing else matters

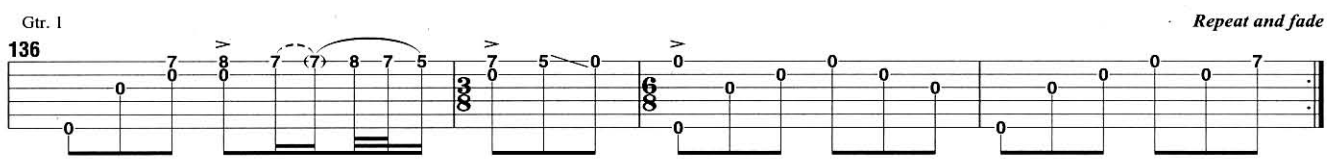
G B7 Em

M **Outro** (5:46)

Em

(note sustains until fade out)





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